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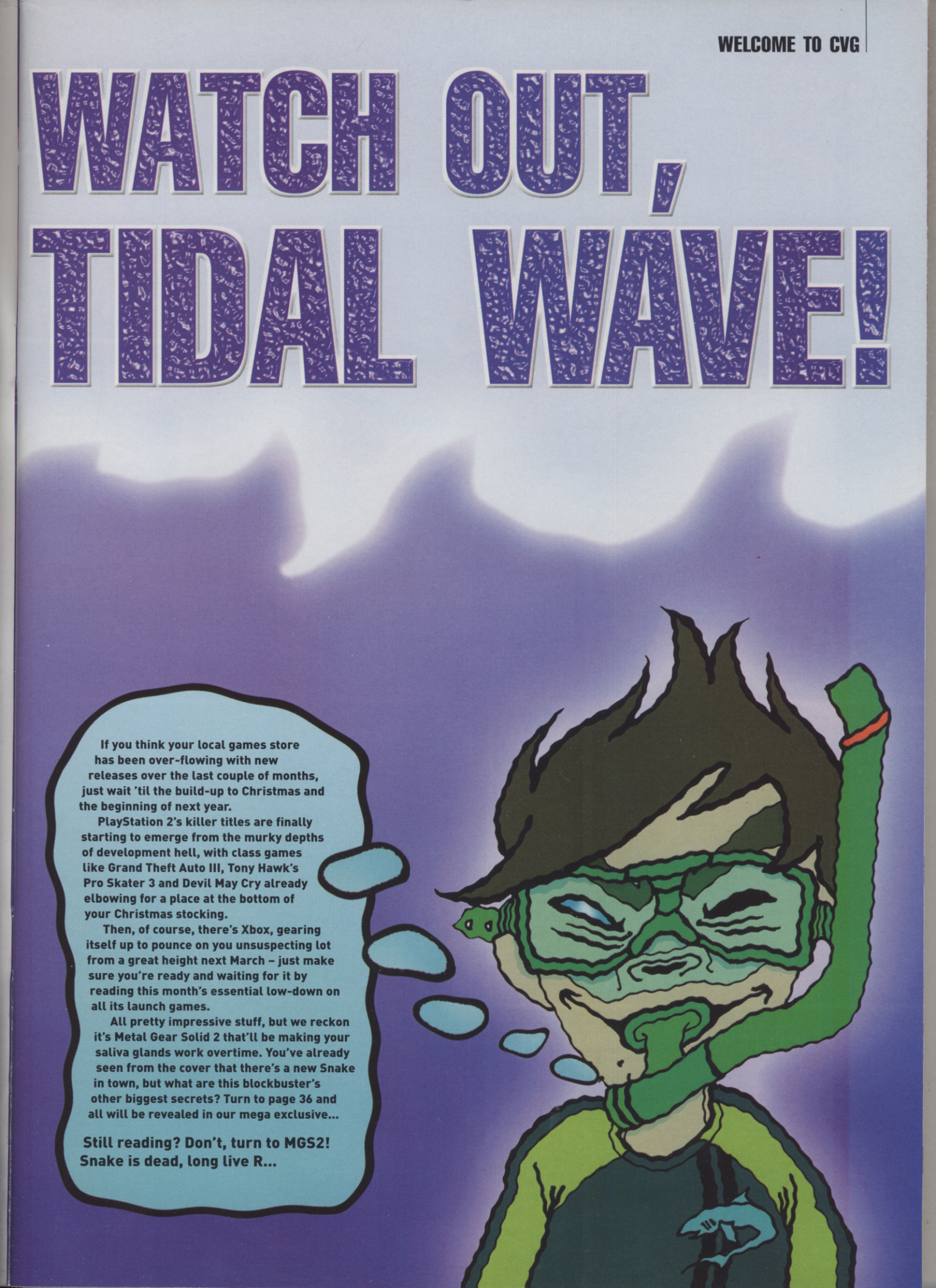
WATCH OUT, TIDAL WAVE!



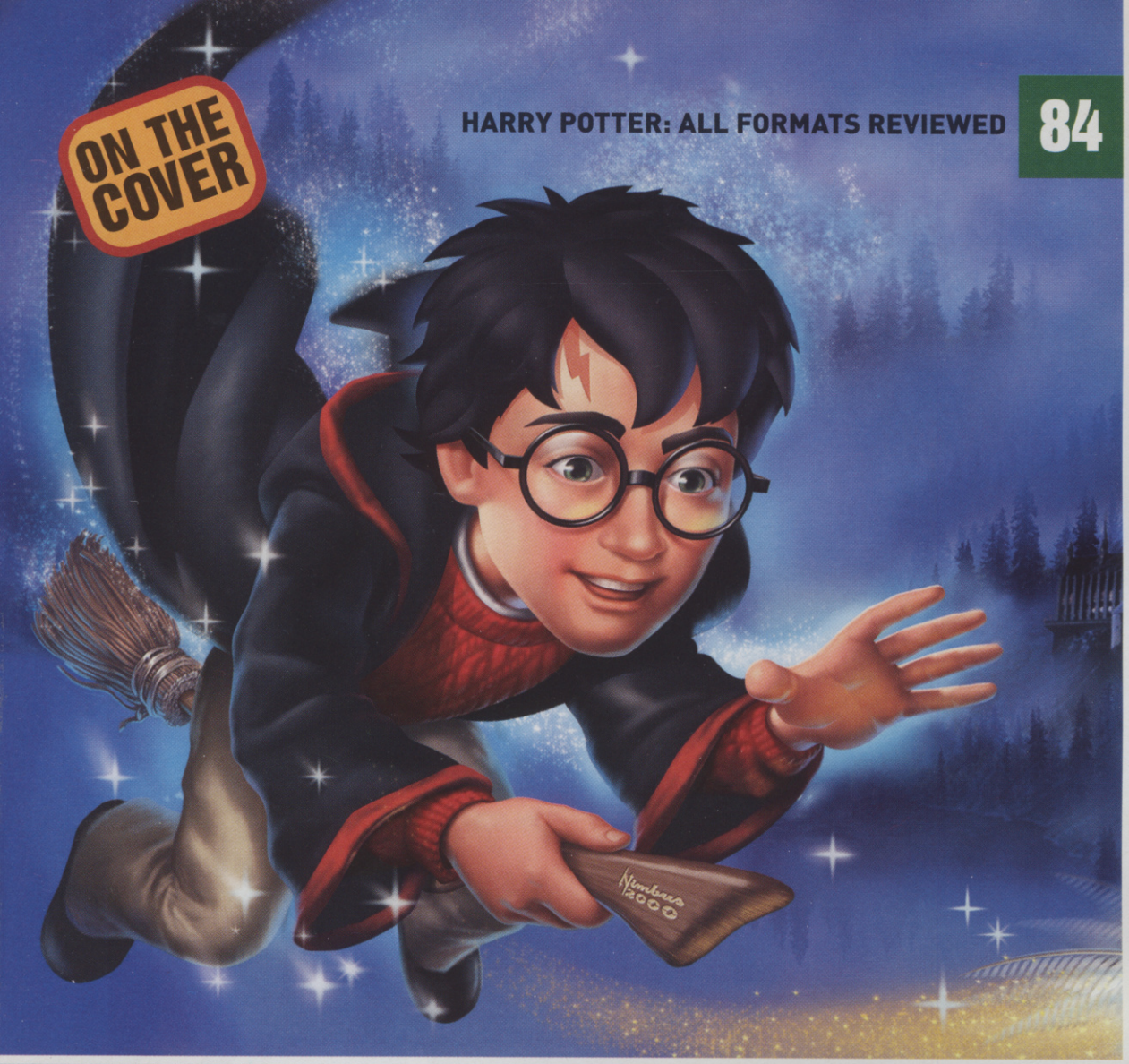
If you think your local games store has been over-flowing with new releases over the last couple of months, just wait 'til the build-up to Christmas and the beginning of next year.

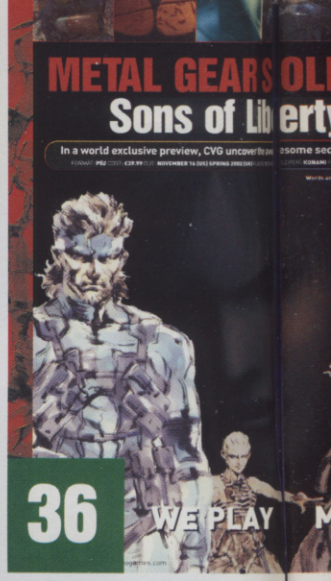
PlayStation 2's killer titles are finally starting to emerge from the murky depths of development hell, with class games like Grand Theft Auto III, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 and Devil May Cry already elbowing for a place at the bottom of your Christmas stocking.

Then, of course, there's Xbox, gearing itself up to pounce on you unsuspecting lot from a great height next March – just make sure you're ready and waiting for it by reading this month's essential low-down on all its launch games.

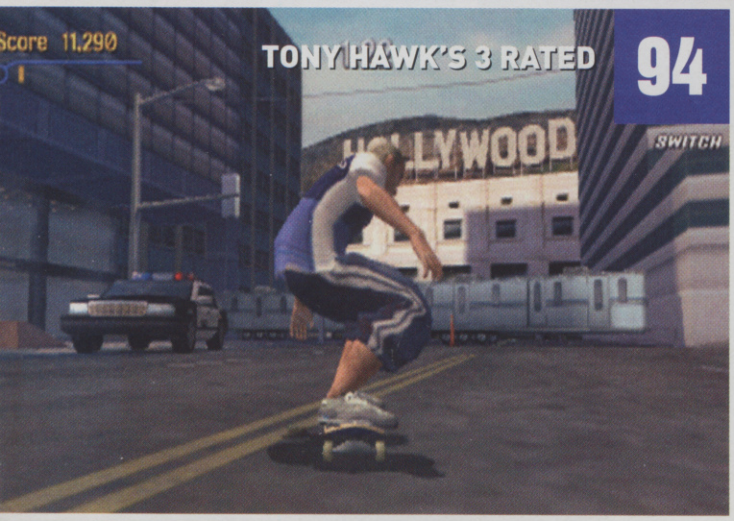
All pretty impressive stuff, but we reckon it's Metal Gear Solid 2 that'll be making your saliva glands work overtime. You've already seen from the cover that there's a new Snake in town, but what are this blockbuster's other biggest secrets? Turn to page 36 and all will be revealed in our mega exclusive...

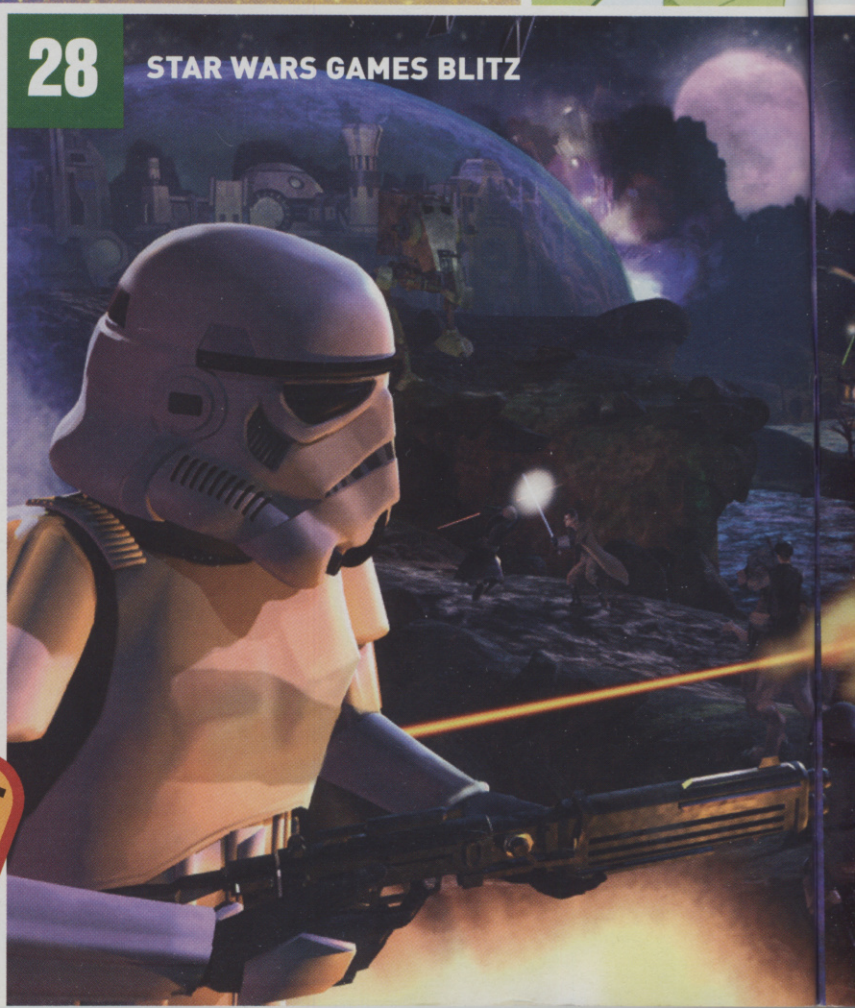
Still reading? Don't, turn to MGS2! Snake is dead, long live R...


ON THE COVER
HARRY POTTER: ALL FORMATS REVIEWED
84

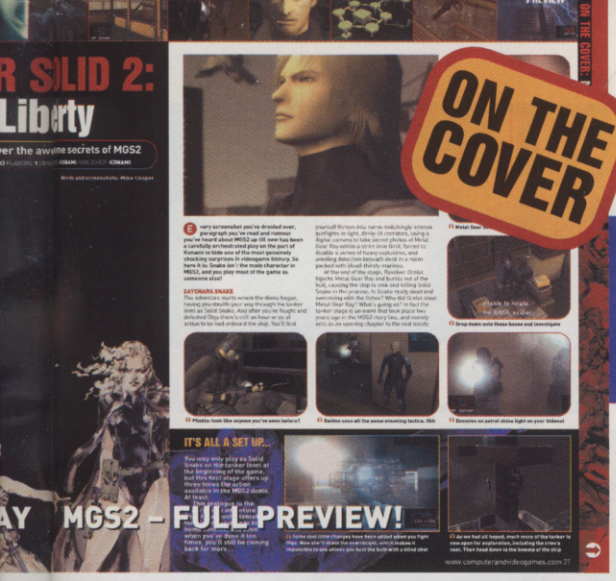

METAL GEAR SOLID
Sons of Liberty
In a world exclusive preview, CVG uncovers awesome sequel
36
WE PLAY

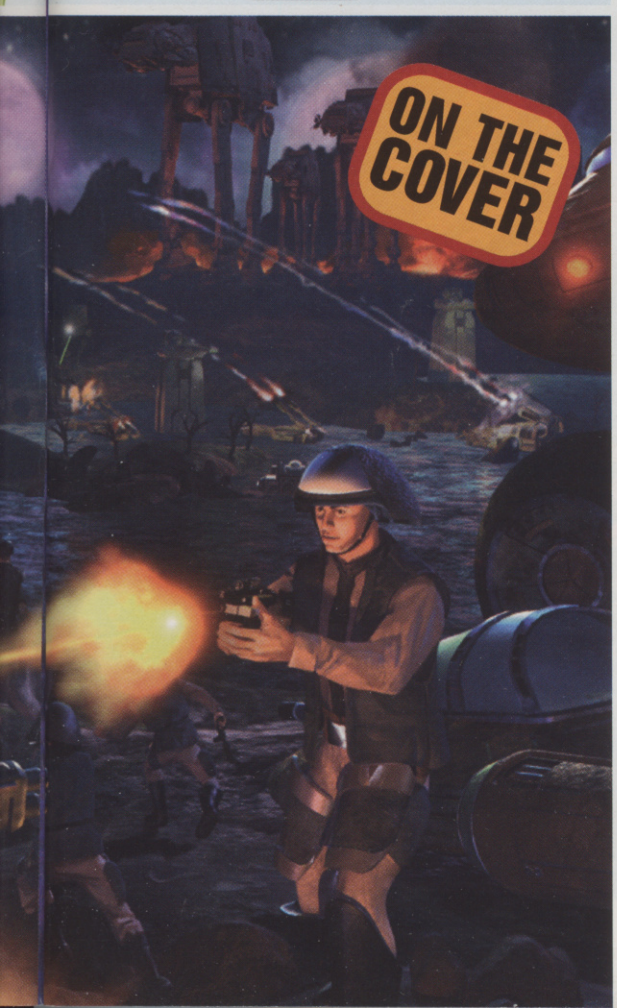
68
MARIO IS


Score 11,290
TONY HAWK'S 3 RATED
94
SWITCH


28
STAR WARS GAMES BLITZ

MEET THE STARS OF XBOX
58
CVG plays over 20 exclusive Xbox games at EU in Cannes, and hangs out with the superstars of the future
DEAD OR ALIVE
JET SET RADIO
ON THE COVER





ISSUE 241 DECEMBER 2001

CONTENTS

PLANET CVG

06 **PS2 online exclusive**
We played it. It's easy, it's wicked

08 **Hitman 2 – baldy's back!**
First screenshots

11 **Crash Test**
Latest add-ons get a workout

16 **Sega on Xbox, 'Cube and GBA**
PS2 won't get *all* Sega's new games

18 **Money off at EB**
Save £5 on your next purchase

20 **Cackman**
Takes aim with his Stupid Gun™

26 **Driven competition**
TV, DVD, GBA and games to win!

FEATURES

68 **Mario Is A Communist**
From Marxist Mario to CND Snake: CVG deciphers the many subtexts, symbolism and hidden messages in videogames

PREVIEWS

42 **Soldier Of Fortune 2**
Bigger, badder and bloodier

44 **Ecco The Dolphin on PS2**
Ecco busts onto a non-Sega format

47 **Pikmin**
Miyamoto goes gardening ga-ga

48 **Ico**
Bizarro PS2 action-puzzler

53 **Return To Castle Wolfenstein**
We did, to get the one-player skinny

55 **Popstar Maker**
Manage and promote your popstars

COVER STORIES

28 **Star Wars Exclusive!**
Six new Wars games! Rogue Leader, Jedi Knight 2, Racer 2: Racer Revenge, Obi-Wan, Galaxies, Galactic Battlegrounds. Wow!

36 **Metal Gear Solid 2**
We've played the FINISHED game

58 **Meet The Stars Of Xbox**
Every exclusive launch game played at X01 in Cannes!

84 **Harry Potter Review Fest**
Every format rated: PSone, GBA, GBC and PC!

FREEPLAY

74 **Hunter's Mailbag**
Rants, pants and turds aplenty

77 **Action Replay**
What to out look for in the world of hardcore hardware from yesteryear

78 **The Doghouse**
His breath may stink, but Hunter's cheats are the mutt's nuts

81 **CVG Challenge**
We're really scared of you. No, really

REVIEWS

93 **Too... Many... Wicked.... Games**
Tony Hawk's 3, GTA3, Devil May Cry, Alien Vs Predator 2, Virtua Tennis 2, Soul Reaver 2, Half-Life, WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It

HANDHELDS

128 **Pokemon Crystal rated**
Advance Wars, Doom, ISS, Ecks V Sever, WWF: Road To Wrestlemania, Super Street Fighter II Turbo Revival, Warioland 4. Phew!

PLANET CVG

THE HOTTEST GAMES & GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

GET YOUR PS2 ONLINE – BEFORE CHRISTMAS

"Hey World! We've Come To Beat Your Ass!"

When the American military invented the Internet back in 30 BQ (Before Quake), bet they had no idea that one day gnarly skaters would be plugging their PS2s into it to play Tony Hawk's 3. To be honest, even CVG had no idea we'd be playing Tony Hawk's on PS2 over the Net, but that's exactly what we've done, thanks to a third-party modem and Ethernet adaptor.

Now pay attention, 007, 'cos things now start to get a bit complicated. You know about Tony Hawk's 3, right? Well, it comes with Internet play built-in, ready for when the PS2 can be plugged straight into a phone socket and you can skate with your mates over the web.

To get your PS2 online, you need a modem and you won't be able to get an official Sony modem until next Spring. But – and here's the rub – you can still get online before then, thanks to third-party peripheral makers who will not only be releasing a modem this year, but also an Ethernet adaptor – a gizmo allowing you to connect with a super-fast 'broadband' line.

It was this that we used to thrash hapless Activision geezers playing Tony Hawk's 3 online. Okay, so our office has a broadband connection and most homes don't (56k is the current standard). But the connection and speed of the thing was great (even playing on a US server), and with new Government moves afoot to boost broadband access across the UK (see box, right), mega-speedy online gaming could soon be a reality.

"PLAY GAMES!" SAYS GOVERNMENT (SORT OF)

If broadband access seems like light-years away, consider this. The UK Government is allocating £30m to promote the installation of this Speedy Gonzales Net connection across the UK. That's right, Tony's cronies WANT you to kick ass on Unreal Tournament.

"With broadband, users can order movies on demand and play games against opponents on the other side of the world," said a Department Of Trade And Industry geezer. He went on to list what else broadband can do for the UK, but we were too busy dreaming of HUGE Wolftenstein deathmatches to hear. The cash is being spread across 10 regions in the UK and is earmarked for schemes like pilot projects to demonstrate broadband in action and developing plans to extend connections. So whaddya know. Politics *is* interesting after all. Sort of.

"GLOBAL DOMINATION"

We spoke to Tim Woodley, a senior brand manager at Activision, the blokes publishing Tony Hawk's 3.

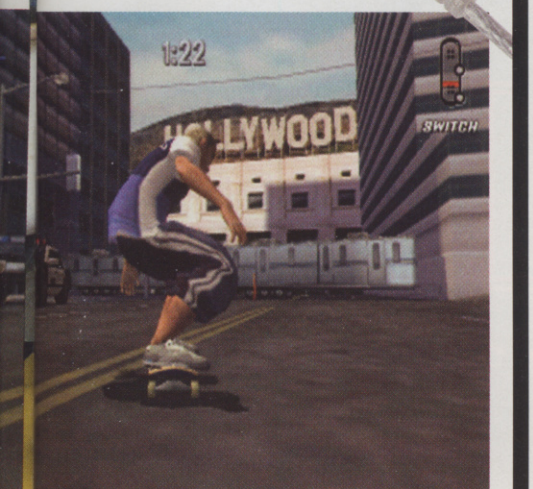
Q. Will the official Sony Ethernet Adaptor and Modem coincide with the launch of Tony Hawk's 3 on PS2 in the UK, or will you only be able to use third-party peripherals?
A. As far as I know the Sony adaptor and modem is not launched until the New Year. Gamers who want to play Tony Hawk's online pre-Xmas will need a third-party Ethernet adaptor. A list of compatible hardware is included in the THPS3 PS2 manual.

Q. The broadband connection worked brilliantly the other day (no lag); will there be any lag with the standard 56k modem, or will it be as fast as the Ethernet Adaptor?
A. All I can say is, I assume the better the hardware, the better the online experience.

Q. Will UK gamers be able to join Tony 3 servers all over the world?
A. This is indeed the intention.

Q. How do you think the whole online thing will affect the future of PS2 gaming and the success of PS2?
A. I think it will take a while for console gamers to get their heads around the appeal of online gaming, as the vast majority are casual gamers who just want to plug in and play. The more they realise how easy it is to get set up online through the PS2, the more word-of-mouth will spread about the benefits that online play brings to gaming. And the more the word spreads, the more servers will spring up to accommodate demands.

The very device we used to get our PS2 netted



Call the cops! We played TH3 online. There is a God

GAMECUBE 'DELAYED'

No UK GameCube 'Til Next Summer!

The UK launch of Nintendo's GameCube console has been delayed until late next Summer – perhaps as late as November.

Despite the fact that no official release date had ever been set for the GameCube in this country, the industry had been expecting a March launch – four months after its US debut. But, for reasons that have not been confirmed, UK gamers won't be able to get their hands on the machine until up to a year after its Japanese release. A full announcement on the launch date and price is expected some time towards the end of this year.

Meanwhile, Nintendoids in the US have been gearing up for the machine's November 18 release. They've been given the full line-up of launch games for the GameCube, and although this will change for the UK, the backbone of the list is likely to remain similar. When we'll see them is another matter and Microsoft must be laughing up their sleeves, since it originally looked like the two were set to go head to head in Europe, just as they will in the US.

THOSE GAMECUBE GAMES IN FULL *

ON LAUNCH: SSX Tricky, Luigi's Mansion, WaveRace: Blue Storm, Star Wars: Rogue Leader: Rogue Squadron 2, Super Monkey Ball, Madden NFL 2002, Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2, Extreme G3, All-Star Baseball 2002, NFL Quarterback Club 2002, Crazy Taxi, NFL Blitz 2002, NHL Hitz 2002, Batman Dark Tomorrow, Universal Studios.

DUE IN 2001: Pikmin, Super Smash Bros Melee, Eternal Darkness, FIFA Soccer 2002, Resident Evil 0, Galleon: Islands Of Mystery.

(*This is for the US launch only. See story right)

Sorry, you'll have to wait a while for Pikmin

Rogue Leader looks mint. Damn those Yanks!

REACH FOR THE CALENDAR

XBOX USA	XBOX UK
November 15, 2001	March 14, 2002

THE 'NEW WAVE' OF CHIPS

Second Coming

While vilified in some quarters for allegedly facilitating piracy and negating warranties, chipping is a fact of life in the games industry.

And it's only ever a matter of time before any new console gets its very own chip, allowing those dedicated gamers among us to play import versions of games (and the less scrupulous to play a selection of 'other' things).

After some limited and less than popular initial efforts, the PlayStation 2 chip bandwagon looks set to really get rolling with a new wave of chips. One games import company told CVG that the new 'Messiah' chip is set to be available for PlayStation 2 in the first half of November. However, no testing has been done on the full capabilities of this 'Messiah' chip. Rumour central also states this will be followed soon after in the UK by the much-delayed Neo 4 chip.

PS2 was only launched in the UK a year ago. Reliable chips were also available for the original PlayStation within about a year of launch in September 1995. Proof again then that history does repeat itself.

HITMAN 2 FOR THE PC FIRST SHOTS

You're a hitman by trade but haven't got the heart for it any more. So you hang up your holster and retire to a monastery.

May not sound great but the twist is that the Russian mafia find you in the monastery and trick you to go back to work. And that's where the fun – and Hitman 2 for the PC – starts.

"The original Hitman was a groundbreaking title in the thinker/shooter genre," says Eidos MD John Davis. "Hitman 2 will push back the boundaries even further." Yeah, yeah.

But looking at the stats, Hitman 2 could well deliver. Playing as an assassin, you must combine strategy with gun skills to get in and out of trouble. New additions include first- and third-person views, multiple play styles, better level design and a more free-roaming game engine. And as for the weaponry, you gets knives, handguns, sniper rifles, grenades, plus chloroform, poison darts and stun guns for extra stealth.

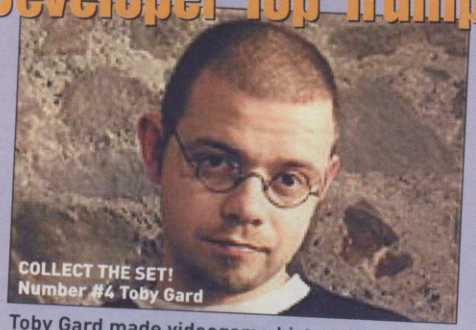
Expect release in Spring '02.

"Take Him Out"

Working for the Russian mafia means much mucking about in the freezing cold

"I'd have had a better life expectancy if I'd stayed in that monastery"

Developer Top Trumps



Toby Gard made videogame history by creating Lara Croft in Tomb Raider, but then left developers Core Design to go it alone...

TONGUE-TWISTING NAME
Only if you're Chris Eubank. Otherwise, no. **20**

WORTH
He invented Lara Croft, so he must be minted **70**

PAST HITS
Er, Tomb Raider! **50**

STAYING POWER
Due to unleash Galleon, his latest project **40**

GEEK OR GOOD LAD?
Come on, he invented Lara **90**

FUTURE POTENTIAL
Galleon's shaping up to be a goodie **60**

GBA AND PS2 GET FACE-LIFTS

Colour Me Bad

Clearly inspired by last month's CVG-decorated consoles, Sony and Nintendo have decided to add extra colour to their machines with these new shades.

An orange and black see-thru GBA, a blue one and one that looks like an iceberg will be available in Japan or at scary prices at your local import shop. Meanwhile, the snazzy new clothes for PS2 are so darn limited, Madonna couldn't get one. OK, so she could if she went to Japan or visited www.playstation.com.

A fetching shade of orange but we preferred Les's coffin design, to tell the truth.

Unleashed on PlayStation®2

COMING SOON

2 Fast 2 Catch, 2 Strong 2 Beat, 2 Good 2 Miss!

PlayStation.2

Crash Bandicoot: "The Wrath Of Cortex" interactive game © 2001 Universal Interactive Studios, Inc. Crash Bandicoot and related characters TM & © Universal Interactive Studios, Inc. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "KONAMI" is a trademark of KONAMI CORPORATION. ©2001 KONAMI CORPORATION. All rights reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.

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New Cherry Bubbaloo.
Cut to the Juice!

ADAMS

New Cherry Bubbaloo®

Bubbaloo is the only bubble gum with a gooey, liquid centre.
Try our new Cherry flavour now and cut to the juice!

Crash Test

DON'T GET LUMPED WITH TRIPE

MOMO FORCE WHEEL

By: Logitech
Cost: £160

Okay, so it might not be within your budget but for the F1 enthusiast this wheel is the absolute pinnacle. Made in association with Momo, the guys who create the actual steering wheels for real F1 cars, leather trim and steel combine in one of the finest luxury wheels known to man. Expensive but note the word 'luxury'!

★★★★★★★★★★

PS2 DVD REMOTE

By: Joytech
Cost: £9.99

No more getting out of your seat and tripping over joypad cables when you want to skip back a scene while watching a DVD on your PS2. This remote unit is nice and small and you can store it in a spare memory card slot when you're not using it. The dinky design is pretty sweet and it's cheap too. Winner.

★★★★★★★★★★

FIGHTING ARENA

By: Wild Things
Cost: £69.99

Full-on motion-sensor aerobic arcade units are hot favourites, and now you can recreate the joy at home, where you won't need to worry about looking a prat. The unit works fine for fighters, and also for rhythm action games such as PaRappa. But let's face it – it's serious cash for a novelty item.

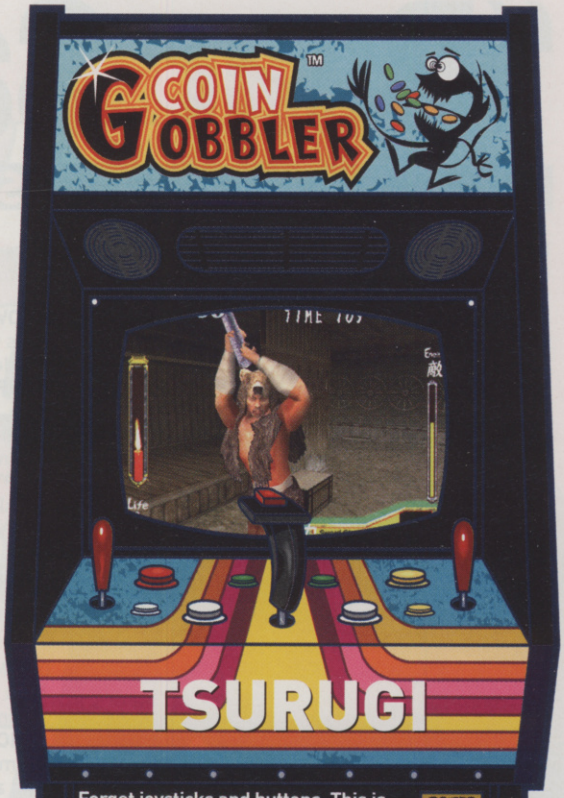
★★★★★★★★★★

FIRESTORM U-PAD

By: Guillemot
Cost: £24.99

This fully analogue PS2 pad split CVG down the middle. Half of us loved the shiny metal and blue grips, the others thought it looked gimmicky. Some of us thought the pad sat well in the hands, the rest got achy-breaky thumbs. At £25 it's not much cheaper than an official pad so you should try it out first.

★★★★★★★★★★



Forget joysticks and buttons. This is the 21st century and we like our samurai action 100% physical. C&VG

When you pick up the motion-sensing sword handle you'll feel like a bit of a plonker, but it's worth the public humiliation of waving around a plastic tube to experience the cool hack-and-slash action that Tsurugi offers.

You're in ancient Japan. You have a sword. You travel on rails wielding your blade against other swordsmen and beefy bosses. Waving your plastic sword handle around slices up enemies, blocks their blows and pulls off razor-sharp special attacks.

It's not graphically groundbreaking, and you might look like a nob, but it's well worth a quid.

ROBOT WARS ON PS2

Nuke-Metal

Robot Wars, eh? Like the television programme then? Robots made out of tin cans and cheap lead piping controlled by acne-ridden sentients doing battle to the sound of Jonathan Pearce howling like a birthing Wookie. Cool.

And that's exactly what you can expect from PS2 Robot Wars. Or something very similar. The much excitable Jonathan Pearce is all present and correct, and he'll no doubt be doing howling Wookie until your ears can take it no more and you hit the mute button.

The acne-ridden sentient we speak of is you, and in the game's Professional mode you have to guide your robot from wee metal nipper to giant steel-mauling adult. Imagine Gran Turismo with robots and you're almost there.

Do well in Pro mode and you can unlock a whole heap of new areas to, ahem, 'scrap' it out in, as well as deathmatch arenas for multiplayer mayhem.

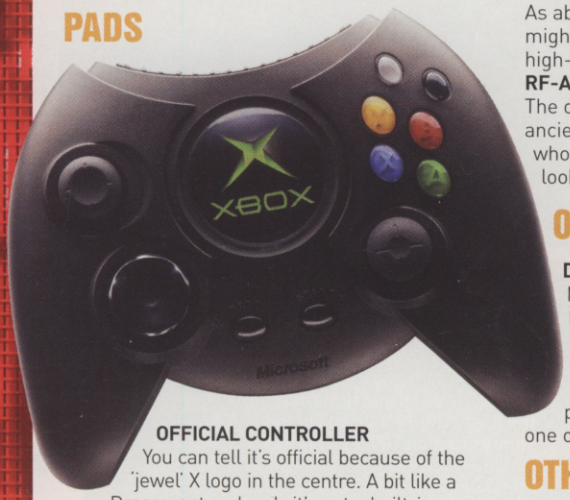
Who's next on the scrap heap?

"Dear Santa"

XBOX HARDWARE – FIRST SHOTS

Like a man with an electronic sheepdog, we've rounded up a list of Xbox peripherals for your viewing pleasure. Which ones will come with the console, we don't know (you'll get a pad, a cable and probably bugger-all else). Neither do we know any prices beyond the £299 console, but check these out anyway!

PADS



OFFICIAL CONTROLLER
You can tell it's official because of the 'jewel' X logo in the centre. A bit like a Dreamcast pad, only it's got a built-in rumble feature.

MAD CATZ ADVANCED CONTROLLER
Voted the best third-party Xbox pad at E3 this year, it sports tough rubber grips and macros that let you programme difficult combo moves.

THRUSTMASTER UPAD
So called, as it's designed in the shape of a U, which means you get to learn a whole new way of holding your hands as you play. If you go third-party, it's between this and the Mad Catz.

CABLES

XBOX ADVANCED AV PACK
Connects your brand new Xbox to your TV's AV and S-Video inputs.

HIGH-DEFINITION AV PACK
As above, but connects the mighty Microsoft machine to a high-definition-ready TV.

RF-ADAPTOR
The old-skool cable. Only for ancient TVs, or for those who like their games to look fuzzy.

OTHER BITS

DVD MOVIE PLAYBACK KIT
Neat remote unit to play DVDs without having to fiddle around with the controller.

VOICE CONNECTOR
Some kind of voice activation thing that will allow you to communicate to other players over the net, providing they've got one of these too.

OTHER CONTROLLERS

FREESTYLER BOARD
Thrustmaster's attempt to market a pad for boarding games. You stand on it; you surf, skate, ride, whatever. Still not sure about it though.

SHADOWBLADE ARCADE STICK
Every console's got to have its arcade stick, and the Xbox is no different. Basically this is perfectly suited for lads who have spent too much time and money in arcades over the years. Nice to see InterAct remembering the ground-roots gamers.

MEMORY CARDS

OFFICIAL MEMORY CARD
It's not a memory card, you dolts, it's a memory unit. It looks like a trendy air-freshener for your car, and it plugs into the controller.

CUSTOM MEMORY CARD
In what's easily the most insane idea since asking Ewan McGregor to play the young Obi-Wan in Episode I, this is a memory card that comes with game saves already on it. Yes, you did read that correctly. It's "packed with great game saves for hit titles that will help you get ahead in your game". Hmm.

WHEELS

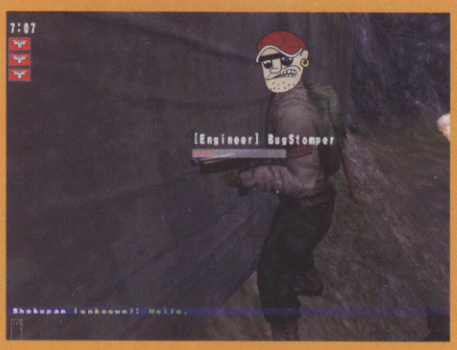
MC2 RACING WHEEL
It's those Mad Catz people again, and they have a wheel jam-packed with twisty-tongue features like the Accudrive Calibration System and, um, pull down stabilizers. Sweet, without being sickly sweet.

NASCAR PRO VICTORY WHEEL
Thrustmaster have gone all-out with their wheel. Not only does it have a clamp for table-top use, but it's got acceleration and brake pedals, all the buttons you'll ever need and probably a Goblin Teasmade as well. Will probably cost the earth, although what the earth's worth these days is anyone's guess. Probably around £100.

PRO RACER
Gamester has bowled us a right googly with this one. It looks like a steering wheel with no base, but is described as the only 'hand-held wheel' for Xbox. What do they mean? Are we supposed to operate all other steering wheels with our feet? Nurse, a thousand milligrams of Glycol, and make it snappy!

Spot The Dan

When you're on the loo leafing through CVG for the tenth time why not squeeze that last bit of fun out of the mag by finding Dan's hidden head. You could even win a limited edition CVG t-shirt if you're first to write or email us with the correct page number.



Last issue Dan was laying demo charges at the sea wall in Wolfenstien

USA RACER FOR PC AND PS2

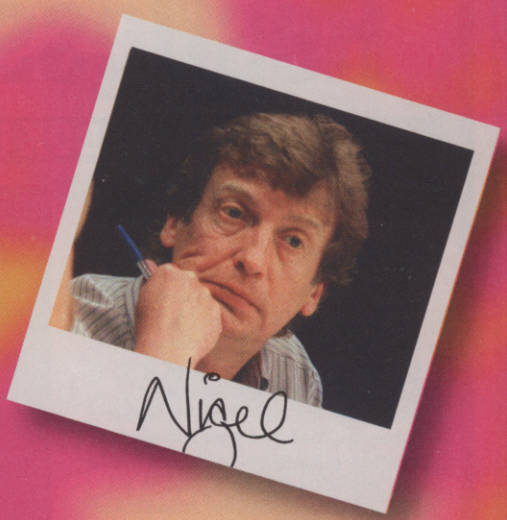
"Last One To LA Smells"

USA Racer comes from the same people who brought you London Racer on PSone, and it looks like being more of the same. Only set in the USA.

Destined for PS2 in March and PC earlier than that, USA Racer promises fast, arcade-style racing over carefully reconstructed American landscapes. So expect stuff like the Grand Canyon and Yellow Stone Park as well as cities including LA, New York, Chicago and Las Vegas. Worth looking out for, we say.

The American dream. A bloody big 18-wheeler truck. Judging by its sheen, this is a PC shot

Are you going to let someone like me choose your career?



NEWS SHORTS

One for the young and easily pleased, Sexbots is a stab at being 'a bit naughty' from E4.com. Played online and basically a Tamagotchi game, it's probably supposed to be 'fun' but we'd rather play proper games. Likewise the new text-messaging trivia game called – wait for it – Texticles. You play it on your mobile phone. So if you think a trivia game on your mobile sounds fun, go to www.uproar.co.uk.

Hear BTopenworld beat its chest and cry, "We ARE online games!" because the broadband blokes have bought the company Games Domain, which is where you go for online gaming. See it at www.gamesdomain.co.uk.

On a footy management tip, LMA Manager 2002 is released on PS2 in Spring '02. For the first time, you can plunder leagues all over Europe for your talent. Just like life!

THIS MONTH: MAXIMO/ GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

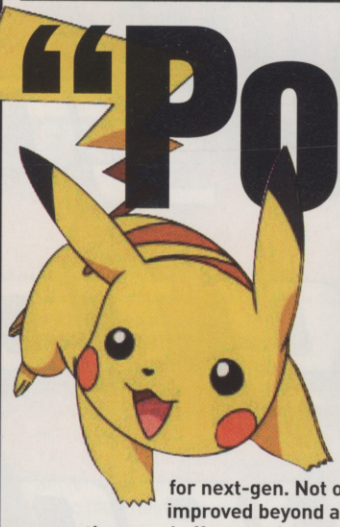
A ring-tone classic from Johnny Minkley

4a2 8#g2 4g2 8#f2 8f2
16#d2 8e2 16#d2 8e2
16#d2 8e2 16#d2 16e2
16#d2 8e2 4#g2 4a2 8#g2
4g2 8#f2 8f2 16#d2 8e2
16#d2 8e2 16#d2 8e2
16#d2 16e2 16#d2 4e2
16#g2 8a2 16#g2 8a2 8a1
16#g2 8a2 16#g2 4a2
16#g2 8a2 16#g2 8a2 8a1
16#g2 8a2 16#g2 4a2

Tempo: 112
(For Nokia phones with Composer only)

AND NOW OVER TO THE MUSIC NEWS...

"Pokemon Rock!"



Thank the Lord for next-gen. Not only are graphics improved beyond all recognition, but so are the sound effects and music.

Which is why everyone with a GCSE in music is scrambling aboard the music-for-games bus. For instance, mega-club giant Ministry Of Sound has inked a deal with Electronic Arts to provide music for FIFA Football 2002 and 2002 FIFA World Cup, meaning you now get banging beats as you're banging in the goals. Elsewhere, The Beastie Boys' label Grand Royal is providing the tunes for the Xbox's Jet Set Radio Future. Expect Bis, Bran Van 3000 and, er, Scapegoat Wax.

Beastie Boys' label: providing tunes for Jet Set Radio Future

The Future Sound Of London go WipEout

Meanwhile, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe has finally announced the tunes to accompany WipEout: Fusion, to include Future Sound Of London, Utah Saints and Amethyst.

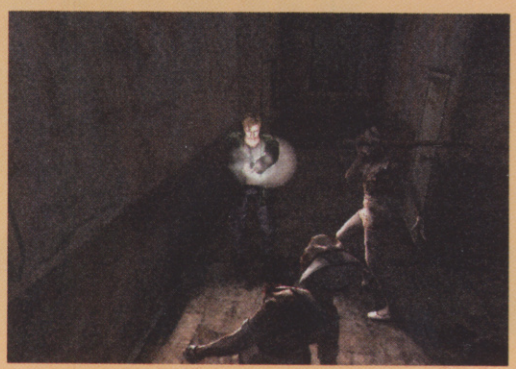
Finally – and God save us – a Pokemon single is being released on December 3. Sounding suspiciously like one of Ant & Dec's Pikachu raps, the song, Gotta Catch 'Em All is done in a nu-metal stylee, and is, quite frankly, pants.

Xbox Suffers From Restless Dreams

SILENT HILL 2 XBOX REMAKE

The Xbox version of Silent Hill 2 is getting a facelift, making it a totally different beast to the PS2 version.

For a kick-off, the Xbox release will have a different name – Silent Hill 2: Restless Dreams. This reflects the fact the storyline is being altered from the PS2 version (called just Silent Hill 2) and significantly expanded. It's also likely the Xbox game will feature a new sub-section in which players get to play as Maria. The sub-level apparently takes SIX HOURS to complete and action taken during its duration will affect the main game. Sounds intriguing. We'll tell you more as we know it.



Get ready for the revamped version of Silent Hill 2 for Xbox, to be called Silent Hill: Restless Dreams. Intriguing

Or are you going to choose your own?

Maybe you are good enough to be in a band if you're lucky. But you could also be brilliant at something else. There are loads of careers in music that don't rely on luck.

Have more of a say in your future. Higher education could lead to a career as a sound engineer, journalist, actor or even artist manager. So, when the next new band comes along, they might just owe it all to you.

For a free magazine call **0800 587 8500** and for more information visit **www.dfes.gov.uk/aimhigher**

Aimhigher™

SEGA UNLEASHES THE BIG GUNS – NO CONSOLE IS SAFE!

"Go, Sega, Go!"

Okay, so imagine you're one of the top geezers at Sega. Comfy office, fanciable secretary, but – oops! – your Dreamcast has gone belly-up. Whaddaya going to do? You think, "Right, so we're *not* too hot at making consoles, but we *can* make games. So that's what we're going to do."

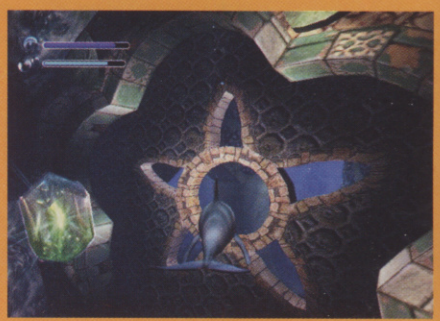
Yep, just like Jacko, (well, not quite) Sega is changing its image. Last month we reported how the company had buddied up with arch-enemies Sony to make games for the PlayStation 2. This month there's even more strange partnerships going on – Sega's going development crazy and spreading the gaming luurve all over!

Perhaps the most exciting news is a link-up with THQ, meaning that Sega and THQ will co-publish 16 titles, including Sonic Advance for GBA, in the US over the next 18 months. So we can expect an official European launch some time in the next zillion years – lucky then that import GBA games work fine on UK handhelds if we get too desperate. Elsewhere, Sega has teamed up with Microsoft, and as well as announcing Phantasy Star Online, will be doing a US-exclusive release of Shenmue II on Xbox.

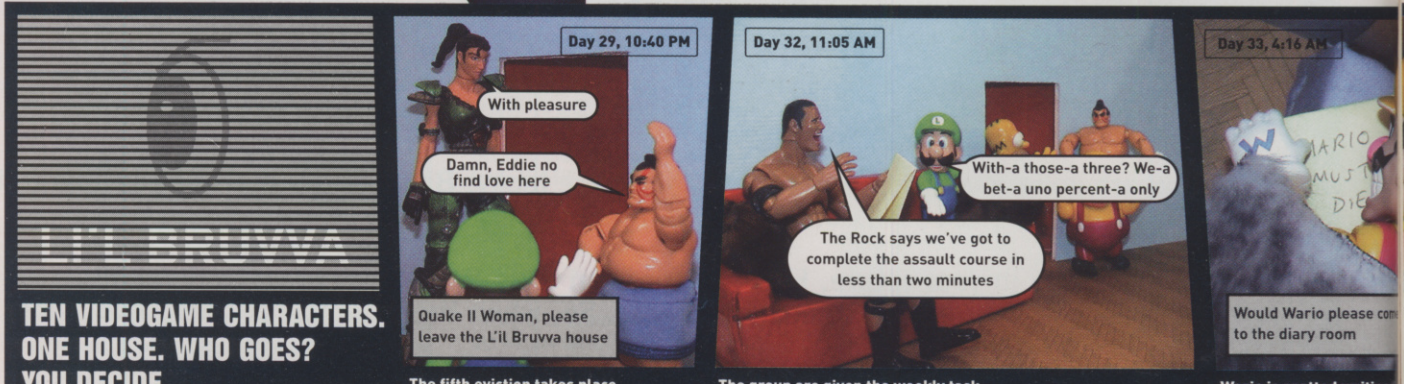
While continuing to knock out the odd game for DC and raiding every other platform into the bargain, Sega has also announced its commitment to online gaming. As a result, Phantasy Star Online is going just about anywhere there's a modem, while Sakura Wars Online on the PS2 and the PC's Derby Owners Club Online are also dedicated to exploring further Internet possibilities.

Where there's a modem, there'll be a version of PSO. Question is, will they be compatible?

So what is Dreamcast's loss is everybody else's gain. And, for anyone who's ever dreamt of playing Mario and Sonic on the same console, you don't have to wait long before your dream will become be a reality.



Ecco: New Age, new format but same old dolphin



The fifth eviction takes place | The group are given the weekly task | Wario is spotted writing

INCOMING FROM SEGA

A handy guide to what games you can expect from Sega on which formats:

PLAYSTATION 2
- Headhunter
- Ecco The Dolphin
- Rez
- Virtua Fighter 4
- Space Channel 5
- F-355 Challenge
- Culdecept II
- Aerodancing 4
- Guru Guru Onsen 2
- Sakura Wars Online
- Eternal Arcadia

GAME BOY ADVANCE
- Sonic Advance
- The House Of The Dead Pinball

GAMECUBE
- Sonic Adventure Battle 2
- Virtua Striker
- Eternal Arcadia
- Phantasy Star Online

PSONE
- Shakatoo Tambourine

XBOX
- Sega GT2000
- Shenmue II (America only (!))
- Phantasy Star Online
- The House Of The Dead 3
- Gun Valkyrie
- Jet Set Radio Future
- Panzer Dragoon
- Crazy Taxi Next

PC
- Phantasy Star Online
- Derby Owners Club Online

DREAMCAST
- Rez
- Let's Make A Pro Soccer Team
- Shenmue II (Japan and Europe later this year)
- NFL 2K2
- Sakura Taisen 4
- NBA 2K2
- Tennis 2K2
- Bomberman Online
- NHL 2K2

"My name is Snake, and I've stolen every games show I've appeared at for the past two years"

Top Gear!

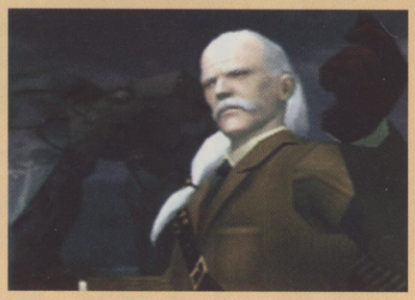
MGS2 ROCKS TOKYO GAMES SHOW

Last month's Tokyo Game Show was shaping up to be the usual round of stands, games, and more stands. Ho-hum.

But then we saw the latest and the most up-to-date footage of Metal Gear Solid 2 for PS2, and it blew us away. It had it all. New characters, new locations and mint graphics. If only you could see it. Wait, you can! Go to our website, www.computerandvideogames.com, where there's footage for you to watch. What's more, we've since had finished code (the first UK mag to do so), so turn to p36 to get the full low-down on how it plays!

Elsewhere at TGS, it was more or less business as usual. Sony chose the show to roll out some bizarre games for PS2, including Bravo Music, where you have to conduct an orchestra (!), as well as a finished version of Ico (see p48).

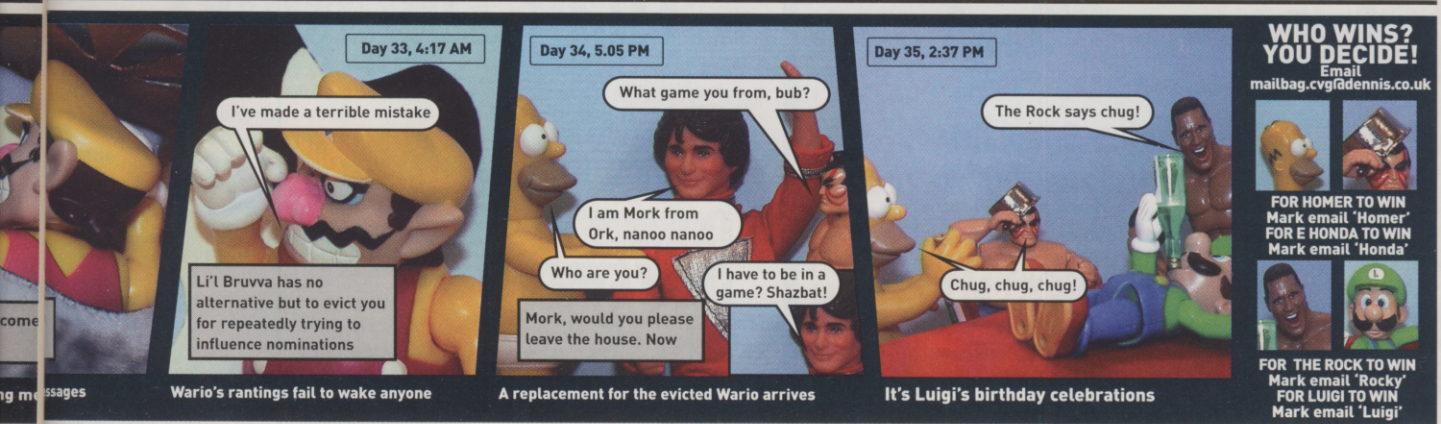
This decontamination facility is a key location



Revolver Ocelot: what's his part in MGS2?

Meanwhile, Namco showed Xenogears for the PS2, which looked cool, if not great. Tekken for the GBA was there, and if Namco can pull this off we'll doff our caps to them. Square had footage from Final Fantasy XI, but it was too early to judge the quality of this online adventure. It also showed off Kingdom Hearts, which sees Disney and Square characters interacting.

But, despite all this from other outfits, Konami's MGS2 was the don of TGS. So check out our preview now!



Wario's rantings fail to wake anyone

A replacement for the evicted Wario arrives

It's Luigi's birthday celebrations

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MULTI-FORMAT TOP SELLERS

1	Champ Manager 2001/2002	(PC)
2	Time Crisis 2	(PS2)
3	This Is Football 2002	(PS2)
4	C&C Red Alert: Yuri's Revenge	(PC)
5	Mario Kart Super Circuit	(GBA)
6	Spy Hunter	(PS2)
7	Gran Turismo 3A-Spec	(PS2)
8	Res Evil Code: Veronica X	(PS2)
9	The Italian Job	(PSone)
10	Tony Hawk's 2	(GBA, PSone, PC, DC)

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CONCEPT CARS IN GT3 A-SPEC!

Great concept. But that's all it will be for European gamers – a concept

So Near, Yet...

Do you want the good news or the bad news? The good news is there's a new version of Gran Turismo 3. Called Gran Turismo Concept, it's like regular GT3 but with some dashing new motors. Fifteen cars have been added and they're concept cars, which means they rock big-style. The likes of Daihatsu, Honda, Matsuda, Nissan, Subaru and Toyota have all contributed vehicles.

So what's the bad news? Easy. The game hasn't been given a European release. At the time of writing, it appears GT Concept will be a Japanese-only title, meaning you'll either have to start a sideline in games importing or just carry on dreaming... Sorry.

(NOT SO) CHEAP PR STUNTS WE LOVE

The Pen Is Mightier Than The Nork!

Here in the Cheap PR Stunts corner of CVG, it's not all naked models on jet-skis. Occasionally something semi-cerebral slips through. So, this month top marks to Sony for attempting to wee on Microsoft's parade during its European bash in Cannes recently.

That'll be the French version then

On discovering the location of Microsoft's secret gig, Sony's boys plastered the town with posters urging hacks to "Just pretend we aren't here", with a PS2 logo below. But Microsoft may have had the last laugh – one PR was overheard saying, "Doing these posters proves we matter. Sony must be scared."

Sunny Delight
Caribbean Style
Cool Refreshing Tropical Taste
Sunny Delight Makes your mouth go mental

CACKMAN

The independent voice of the free gaming nation

THE X COMMANDMENTS

So, the mighty Xblock has finally arrived in America. Even as you read this, thousands of eager gamers are caught up in an experience Microsoft describe as being like "a rave in a nuclear power station". Cackman doesn't doubt it. Looking at the launch line-up, the Xbox experience definitely seems as repetitive as dance music.

Word has it that Microsoft laid down strict guidelines to developers on how to make Xbox games. Using expensive focus group research, they discovered what gamers wanted: how they liked their option screens, which button should be Fire, how hard the first level should be. In other words, rules to ensure no-one would be confused by different gameplay or controls.

Looks like they succeeded, cos you'd be hard pushed to tell any of the games apart. But just in case you're unsure of what to expect, here are The Ten Commandments to making an Xbox game.

1. SET IT IN THE FUTURE...
Even if it's a puzzle game. Any year after 2020 AD is okay. Post-apocalyptic is even better. Or a parallel universe. Anything with futuristic weaponry that can utilise the Power Of Xbox™.

2. ...OR IN SPACE
This allows for fantastical worlds, although volcanic, desert and swamp planets will do. Give them intergalactic names like Shadoon, Ferix or Shrike. For variety, make one a moon. A magma-filled one.

3. MAKE IT A FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER
Squad-based, with tactical teamwork. Only Xbox can handle such magnitude. And you can climb into any vehicle. Especially alien ones. They look like insects, which is cooler.

4. YOUR SQUAD MUST BE HARD
Must be commandos or mercs. Each is a specialist, like a cyborg-enhanced sniper. Give 'em bad-ass names like Tex or Flint. Make sure one's an alien or a robot.

5. GIVE IT A ONE-WORD NAME
Halo, SWAT, Amped, the kids love that. Then, as excitement reaches fever pitch, screw it up with a terrible subtitle. for example... Malice: A Kat's Tale. Ouch.

6. ALTERNATIVELY, DO A DRIVING GAME
Don't be original. It must feature real cars and real cities so everyone can see how realistic it all is. All the cars must crash, demonstrating unbelievable crunching effects.

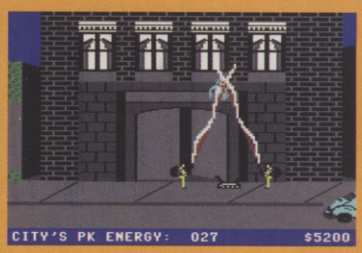
7. PAY LOADS FOR PS2 TITLE
Just make up a few 'extra features' and add an X to the end of the name. Sorted.

8. MENTION THE AWESOME POWER OF XBOX (REPEATEDLY)
Xbox can perform bump-mapping, spectacular lighting, real-time shadowing, reflection mapping. Remind people of this. If that's not enough, make something up like 'reality-bending special effects'. There's no way PS2 can do that.

9. PAY A MARKETING GUY TO SAY IT
Nothing beats the makers of a PS2 game claiming their Xbox version "is the most advanced version ever seen". Pay extra if they agree it "blurs fantasy and reality."

10. PUT SHREK IN IT
He's great with the kids.

ALSO IN STOCK: 'CUBE
In all this Xcitement, it's easy to forget GameCube has also been released in the US. No really, it has. Some critics claim the launch titles are just the same old N64 games. Which is of course rubbish, GameCube cartridges are much thinner. And round.



Luigi's Mansion: state-of-the-art

SUPER BOMBAD JOGGING
Shrek Kart is one of next year's 'big games to watch', but Cackman senses the Comedy Go-Karting genre may be on the way out, soon to be replaced by Comedy Jogging. Following the hilarity of Rayman M comes Mad Dash Racing on Xbox – featuring enough galloping, bandy-legged animals to make a French developer weep. Crash Bandicoot must be strapping on his flippers already.

Suddenly Rayman looks oh-so cool

INFOGRAMES

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FROM THE SCUM
OF THE UNIVERSE

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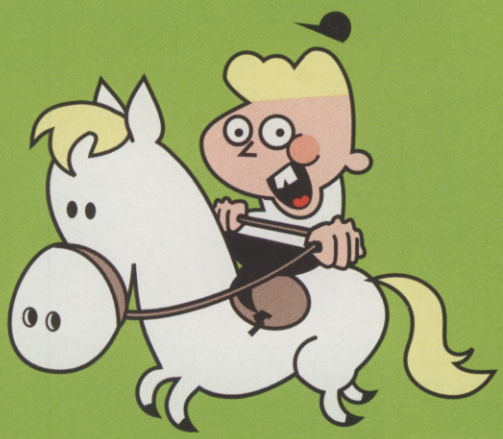

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THEN WE TAKE IT AWAY

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THE XPERIENCE

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DARK SUMMIT UPDATE

The Dark Side

EA has gone the racing and trickstyle route with its two snowboarding games, but THQ has gone one step further by making its a mission-based boarder.

The plot revolves around a Ranger who is trying to stop people snowboarding on a mountain. You open up the banned areas by pulling stunts and avoiding his traps. Sounds like SSX meets Scooby Doo without the dog. The Xbox and PS2 releases are set for early next year and it's coming on in leaps and bounds since we last saw code.

Do the splits to solve mysteries. Maybe

WIN FREE FEAST AND MERCHANDISE!

Lord Of The Onion Rings!

CVG has teamed up with New Line Cinema and Burger King to spread Lord Of The Rings-related burger-shaped joy throughout the land!

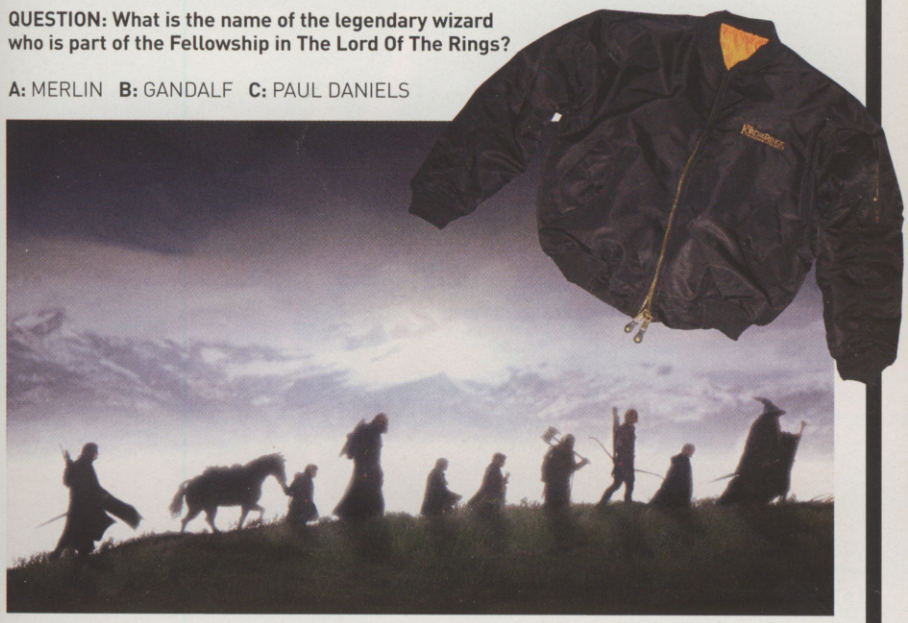
One lucky CVG reader will win a highly collectable Lord Of The Rings crew jacket and a party meal at Burger King for 20 people. We've also got 20 limited edition Lord of the Rings watches and key rings for the winner and his mates.

The first instalment in the trilogy of movies, The Fellowship Of The Ring, hits cinemas on December 19th. It chronicles the adventures of Frodo Baggins, a brave young hobbit who must save Middle Earth from destruction at the hands of the Dark Lord. Frodo and a band of intrepid heroes set out across Middle Earth but soon encounter conflict, danger and Ring Wraiths!

Just answer the question below and send to: Lord of Burgers compo, Computer and Video Games, Dennis Publishing Ltd, 30 Cleveland Street, London, W1P 5FF.

QUESTION: What is the name of the legendary wizard who is part of the Fellowship in The Lord Of The Rings?

A: MERLIN **B:** GANDALF **C:** PAUL DANIELS



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NEWS SHORTS

Slash! Garotte! Kill! All are important components of Hunter: The Reckoning, a gory action-packed spectacular for Xbox. Imagine Gauntlet, only done in the bestist, beefiest 3D and with Xbox graphics (better than magic, some say) to boot.

Empire has signed up the rights for PC versions of Sega classics Virtua Tennis and Crazy Taxi. Not-quite-so-classic Sega Marine Fishing and 100 Swords are also part of the deal.

Arcade classic Defender is set to blast back onto our screens. Midway is developing a version of the crusty coin-op for PlayStation 2, Xbox and GameCube scheduled to appear next year. Why? We're not sure – it can't be an attempt to make money if sales for Gradius III And IV on PS2 were anything to go by. Maybe Midway is re-establishing the brand prior to launching an all-new shiny 3D Elite 'em up version. Well, we can dream...

Don't hold your breath, but Salt Lake 2002 is the official game of the Winter Olympics, and it's coming to Game Boy Advance. Cool, no? The game will feature six events including snowboarding and skiing, while all the environments are based on actual places in Salt Lake City.

The US Army is getting into games development with a couple of American companies. The games are supposed to be so accurate that they could be used to recruit commanders with experience and knowledge gained in-game. Haven't they heard of Flashpoint? Anyway, look for two games in 2003.

By a strange quirk of timing, Acclaim's new Legends of Wrestling on PS2 features the current hottest wrestler in the WWF, Rob Van Dam – which is more than THQ could manage in SmackDown! Just Bring It. Why? Because he signed a deal with Acclaim just days before signing up with the WWF.

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THE GETAWAY'S COMING

Step On It!

Imagine a cross between Driver, Grand Theft Auto, Metropolis Street Racer and The Italian Job.

The Getaway is just that. A crime game with loads of driving based in London, now set for release in May 2002.

The graphics are top-notch, with photo-realism the order of the day. Real-life London streets are shown in all their gloriously grim detail, taken from more than 30,000 photos and 40 hours of video footage. Throw into the mix a storyline full of gangster violence, and mission-based gameplay straight outta Grand Theft Auto, and we're looking at a real doozy come next Spring.

The streets of London – after a neutron bomb attack, that is

THE GETAWAY: WHY WE LIKE IT

Tour London by car and on foot. Loads of freedom to roam about. Dodgy gentlemen's club in Soho at 3am? Yes, please!

The environment reacts to what happens in the game. So if you crash into something, you'll see it being repaired on a later mission.

WE MAKE THIS MAG

Meet CVG

Mike Cooper, Writer

Last month it was all "GameCube this, GameCube that". Now it's all "Xbox that, Xbox this". He's a bit of a tart like that.

Les Ellis, Games Editor

Took his annual bath this month to try and impress the boys at LucasArts into giving him a copy of Rogue Leader. Nearly worked, too

Jenny McComb, Designer

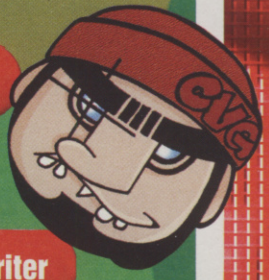
After several strong shandys, arm-wrestled the entire team into submission to be first to play Headhunter on PS2. Middle names: Jet Li.

Dan Payne, Art Editor

Spotting his reflection while Mario Advance-ing in the bog, Dan has erected mirrors by every console so he can watch himself playing. Perv.

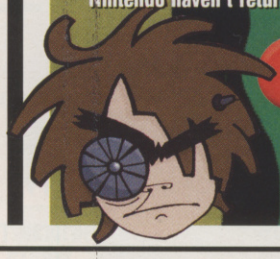
Alex Simmons, Editor

Returned from holiday two weeks late claiming he overslept. Has also finished every GBA game released so far. "Pure coincidence", he said.



Pete Walker, Deputy Editor

Planning global gaming domination with his design for X-Cube Station™. Strangely, Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo haven't returned his calls.



Lee Skittrell, Senior Writer

Mewled pathetically when the Ecco PS2 DVD arrived and cooed like a clown at the Sega logo in the start up screen. Lee's motto: no shame.

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DRIVEN COMPO: £1,100 OF GEAR TO WIN!

WHAM, BANG, THANK YOU BAM!

If blessing GBA with Ecks Vs Sever (see p123) isn't enough reason to worship Bam! Entertainment, how does owning over £1,100 worth of home entertainment gear sound?

To celebrate the release of Driven on GBA and PS2, CVG has teamed up with Bam! to stick a rocket in your gaming tailpipe with a compo that defies all laws of logic in its generosity.

One lucky winner will bag a superb Hitachi 28" widescreen telly with NICAM stereo sound, a Hitachi HTD-K150 Home Cinema System (that's a top-quality DVD player to you and me), as well as a Game Boy Advance plus copies of the GBA and PS2 versions of Driven, Sly Stallone's latest hi-octane blockbuster.

Simply answer the question in the coupon below, fill in your details, and mail it to our usual address, marked 'Driven competition'.

I WANT IT ALL!

QUESTION:
Which Hollywood hero is the star of the movie Driven?

Tick which answer you think is correct:

A. Tom Cruise ☐

B. Sly Stallone ☐

C. Big Arnie ☐

D. Roger Rabbit ☐

Name ..... Age .....

Address .....

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Telephone .....

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RULES
First one out of the hat wins everything – there's no prize for coming second in this compo. All entries in by December 20. Editor's decision is final.

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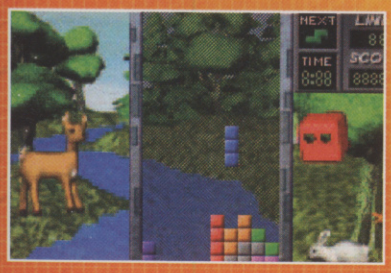

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FEEL TI

LucasArts unleashes the full

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, someone has finally realised that the sci-fi series responsible for some of cinema's finest moments (light sabers, TIE Fighter sound effects and Darth Vader) should be capable of producing more than one naff game every 12 months or so. And lo, armed with this knowledge LucasArts has harnessed the power of The Force and unveiled a Death Star full of games heading to a system near you soon...

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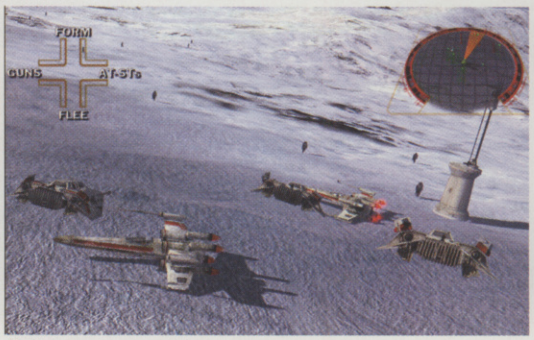
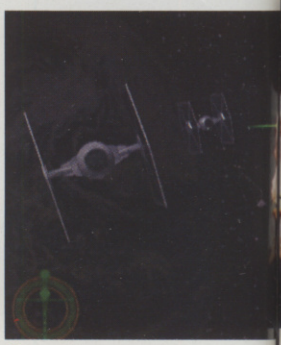
STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON II: ROGUE LEADER

Branson's balloon adventure was about to end in tears



Even on Hoth parking is an utter nightmare



Up close and personal with a

Format: GameCube
Out: Now (US) 2002 TBC (UK)
Developer: Factor 5
Publisher: LucasArts

Zooming down *that* trench, dodging lasers before firing a proton torpedo down the Death Star's exhaust port. Skimming so close to the surface of Hoth your arse gets frozen as you down Imperial Walkers with your harpoon gun. Going head-to-head with Imperial Star Destroyers in the momma of space scraps, rattling off in the crippling blow that guarantees victory.

Every little (and big) kid has dreamt of doing this since the original Star Wars movie first came out and now you really can. You don't need a billion pound PC to play the part of the next Luke Skylwalker either, as Rogue Leader looks as better than Jordan in the buff thanks to GameCube's pinsharp graphics. Even the music is stirring, making you actually feel like a galactic hero when you're piloting an X-Wing over the Death Star.

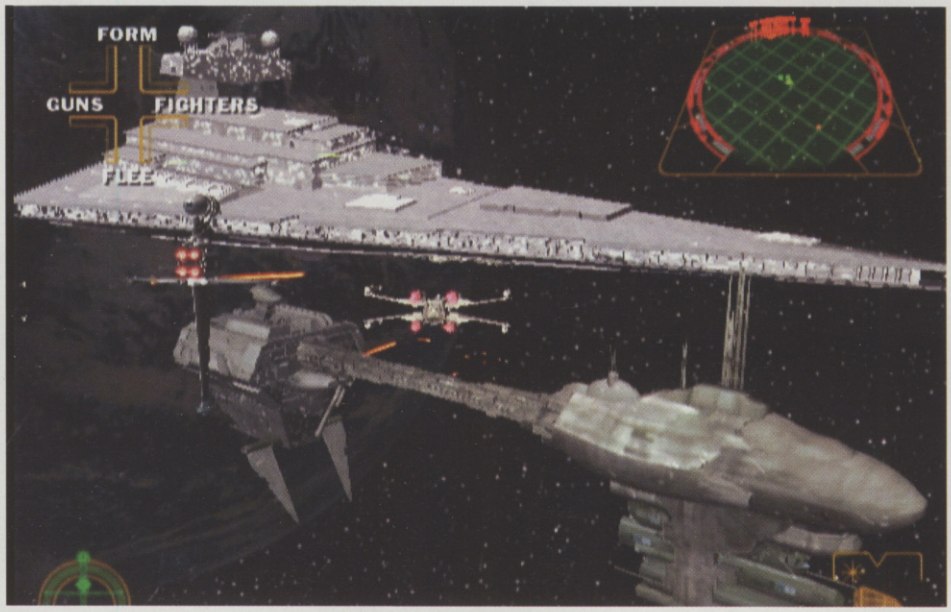
EMPIRE EPIC

All too often the word 'epic' is given to games that, in all honesty, are about as epic as a wet Monday in Bath. Rogue Leader is a non-stop battlethon, packed with edge-of-your-seat excitement and the best ships and locations from A New Hope, Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi. What's more it's all beautifully realised thanks to the brute force of 'Cube. Now *that's* epic.

Sure, it's the kind of game where a well-oiled trigger finger is more important than a Mensa brain. But why waste time pondering the complexities of The Force when you could be flying upside-down, blowing the crap out of the Empire?

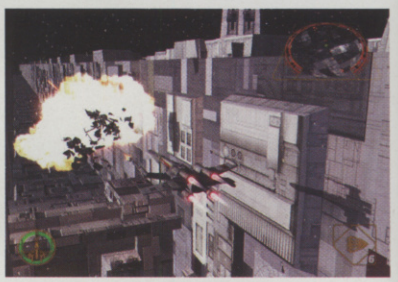
Developer Factor 5 has taken the idea of Rogue Squadron one step further here, and rather than simply exploiting the Star Wars universe by making a themed but

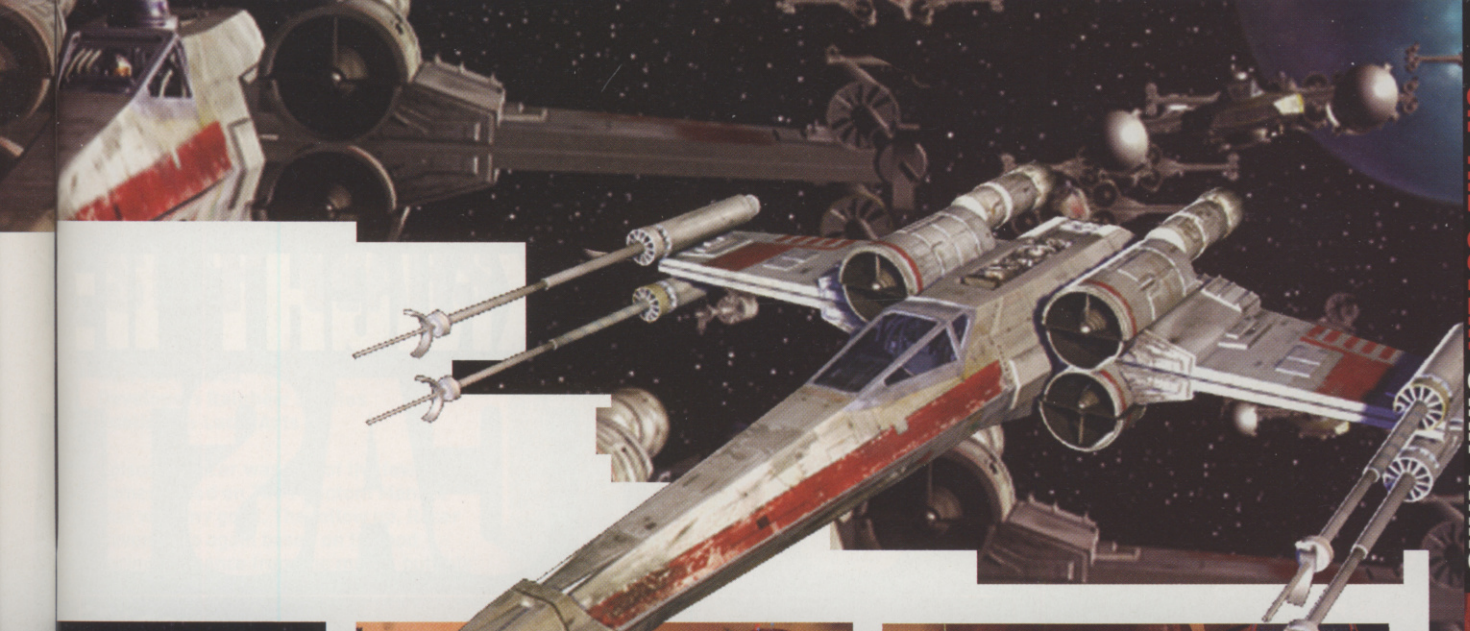
Notice the orders available to give your wingmen on the top left of the screen. You're gonna need their help



TIE Fighters dead ahead – take 'em down

The game's main attraction, the Death Star trench sequence. Prepare to be amazed





squad of TIE fighters

Gunning down balloons in your A-Wing. Top fun

Even though they don't fire back, this is far from easy

ultimately unrewarding blast 'em up, it has managed to create a seamless movie-like experience, right down to the gut-wrenching musical score and killer sound effects. Plug in surround sound and you'll hear TIE fighters swooping over your head and circle round behind you. If ever a game was made to be played at full volume, this is it.

SOUL OF SCI-FI

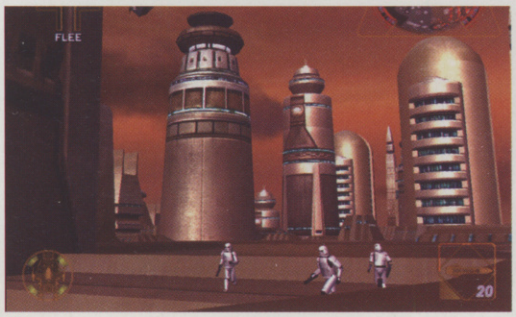
The main campaign features 11 missions, and the familiar locations combined with cinematic visual effects really drive this experience home. Fail to be impressed by the rising and setting of the twin suns of Tatooine and you clearly lack a sci-fi soul.

It's packed with authentic Star Wars touches too – even the targeting computer clips across your view during the tense trench run.

We reckon this could be the ultimate Star Wars flight and fight game, and it's no coincidence that it's launching with the 'Cube in the US. People will buy machines just to play this – you should too.

CVG Reckons

This *is* Star Wars. 'Nuff said.



Heh, heh... watch 'em run in terror as you swoop over

These guys are easy, but you'll need tow cables for their big brothers

Ambush alert! Some evasive action required here, guys

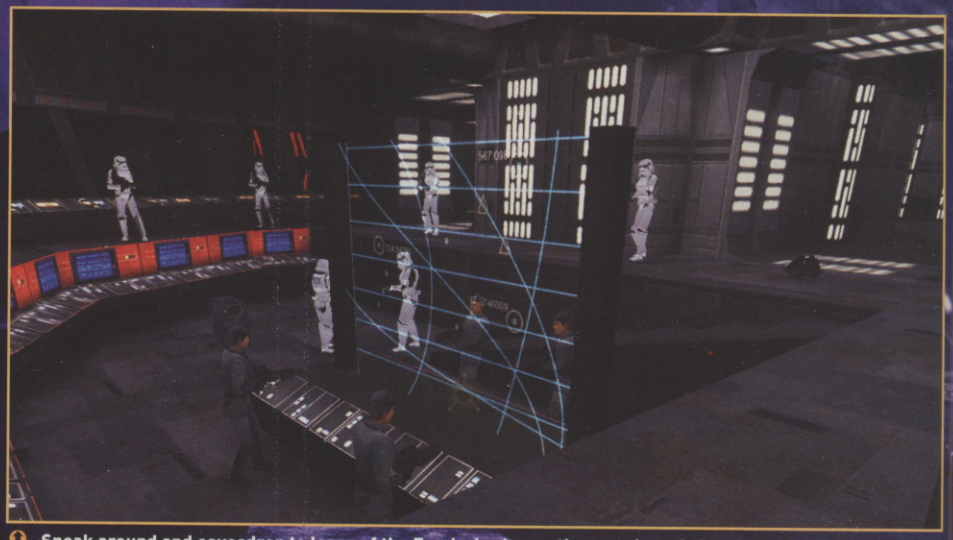
Be amazed at the TIE fighter noises, then kill them

STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT II: JEDI OUTCAST

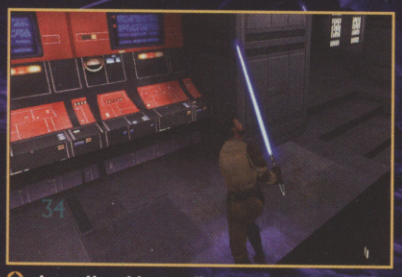
Format: PC
Out: Early 2002
Developer: Raven
Publisher: LucasArts

Star Wars and first-person shooters. You're excited already, right? Course you are, you're only human. But if we say it's powered by the Quake 3 engine and developed by the team behind Soldier Of Fortune and Elite Force, then you'd have to be deader than Alderaan not to want this bad enough to sell your granny.

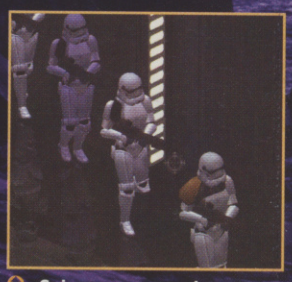
Apart from the usual plethora of Star Wars weapons including a trusty light saber, Kyle Katarn (that's you) has an expanded range of Force powers to use. Lightning and extra mind powers are at your disposal, while old familiars like healing return too. Your mission is to prevent a bunch of Dark Jedi Knights from acquiring the technology that will harness the power of The Force for their evil plans.



Sneak around and eavesdrop to learn of the Empire's plans – then run in and slaughter all of 'em



As well as blaster fights, you also get light saber duels against the Empire's finest



Sniper weapons – how we love them here at CVG

Stormtrooper auditions for the latest edition of Pop Idols

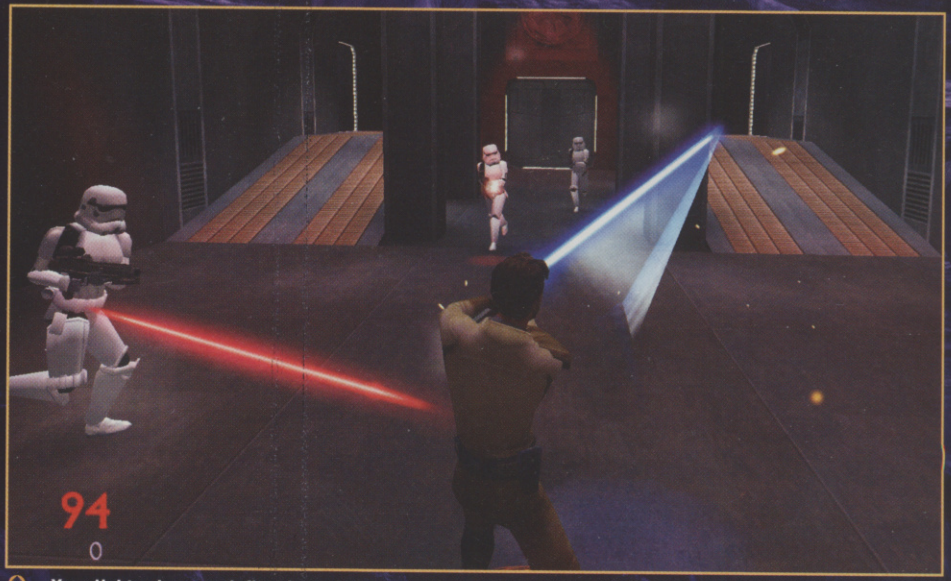
Use your force powers to solve some of the puzzles

You'll stealthily crawl and not quite so stealthily blast your way through familiar locations such as Cloud City, plus not so familiar but nevertheless cool ones such as the Jedi Academy on Yavin 4. Multiplayer is more focussed than before, with plenty of game modes and options. A real improvement on the clumsy deathmatching of the original. Playing as stormtroopers attacking a heavily defended rebel base in a team game? Are we excited? Too bloody right.

The Dark Forces series from which this spawned has always been more story-based than just mindless blasting. Add in the Quake looks and Raven's killer touch, and Star Wars could finally stake a claim as emperor of all shooters.

CVG Reckons

More exciting than Leia wearing that gold bikini in Return of the Jedi.



Your light saber can deflect laser bolts as well as relieve a Stormtrooper's body of its head

STAR WARS RACER II: RACER REVENGE

Format: PS2
Out: Early 2002
Developer: Rainbow Studios
Publisher: LucasArts

Episode I Racer was one of the few games based on The Phantom Menace that was any good. The follow up, Racer Revenge, is again based on the pod racing sequence from the movie, but this time there's over 16 characters to play as, including Anakin Skywalker and your nemesis from the first game, Sebulba.

The graphics are crisper than before and full of spectacular crash carnage. Staying true to the movie, there are still no weapons on the pods so you have to rely on sheer speed, clever driving and the occasional nudge to come out alive, let alone be the winner. The AI has also been enhanced to give them personalities that bear grudges rather than just trying to get to the finish as fast as possible.

Rainbow Studios is also responsible for ATV Off-Road Fury, one of our favourite PS2 racers, so with a little bit of luck and the LucasArts Star Wars magic, this should be safe in their hands.

CVG Reckons

The follow-up to the only game to emerge from the Episode I mess with any credit, and this looks even more polished than ever.

Young Anakin – slightly less annoying than Jar Jar

At 600mph, the slightest contact can be deadly

See that corner ahead? That guy certainly didn't

Some of the racers look truly bizarre

STAR WARS OBI-WAN

Obi-Wan flips like a nubile gymnast

Attacks from behind test your reactions

Format: Xbox
Out: TBC
Developer: LucasArts
Publisher: LucasArts

Obi-Wan has been talked about in one form or another for what feels like years. But finally we've actually played it. As you may have guessed, you are Obi-Wan, running round scything down countless enemies with your light saber, using The Force to perform various tricks like knocking over robots, and pushing and pulling stuff. You move with one analogue stick and control your light saber with the other, which takes some getting used to, but it's worth it.

Why? Persevere and, apart from dealing with hordes of Trade Federation battle droids, you get to fight the one and only Darth Maul, clashing against the awesome double-bladed light saber. And if that wasn't enough (what do you want, blood?) the fact that it's the first Star Wars game on Xbox should perk up your interest even more.

CVG Reckons

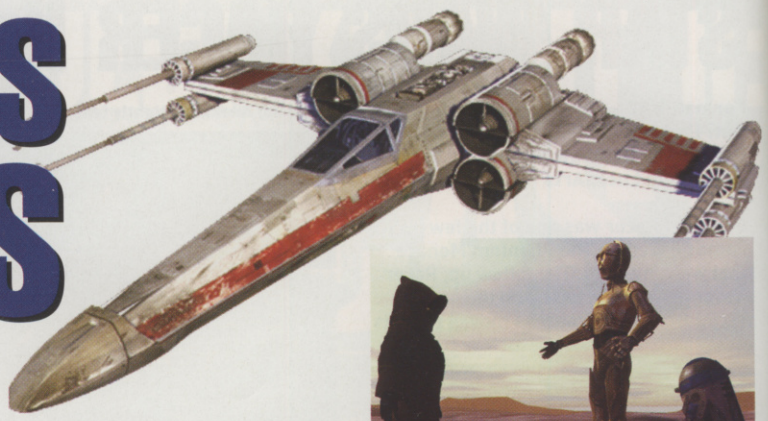
Xbox and Star Wars? In this one The Force should be strong, Yoda. Fingers crossed.

Obi does his Tony Hawk impression

The Jedi high-jump event

Eat light saber death, robot boy

STAR WARS GALAXIES



Format: PC
Out: TBC
Developer: Verant/Sony Online
Publisher: LucasArts

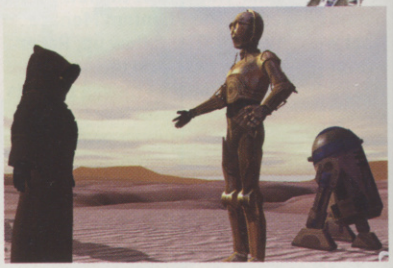
Galaxies is a Star Wars fan's ultimate fantasy. An online, free-roaming Star Wars role-player where you can go anywhere and do anything. While many regard the world of online RPGs as a scary place occupied by goblin-slaying geeks using terms like 'ROFL' instead of real words, this may just change all that. After all, who wouldn't want to travel the entire Wars universe, meet all the characters and do whatever you want to?

R2-D2: a robot, not some weird online RPG phrase

It's an exciting prospect, but let's just hope Verant has learnt a lesson or two in customer care and bug fixing from its experiences with online orc-athon Everquest. Otherwise, you can expect it to be as frustrating as it is exciting, especially in the early days. But get past those and the potential is mind-blowing.

While you won't be able to play as Han Solo, you can choose from eight Wars species like human or wookie. Starting as an utter newbie, you teach your character new skills and training him in the ways of The Rebel Alliance or The Empire, depending on how you play. As your character develops, you can carry out more demanding quests and missions (set in locations from the movies), all the while interacting with other players and non-player characters alike.

Plans are already in place to release an expansion a few months after the main game (er, why?) that lets you own ships and fly around in space. So you'll be able to train as a Jedi and get in an X-Wing and fly off to battle The Empire. We can see some Star Wars fans simply giving up on real life when this gets released.



All your favourite Star Wars characters will be in here... somewhere

The green freak always liked to sneak in unnoticed when tourists were taking photos

CVG Reckons

Such incredible potential, especially if they can include console gamers in the online action. Come on, do it!

STAR WARS: GALACTIC BATTLEGROUNDS

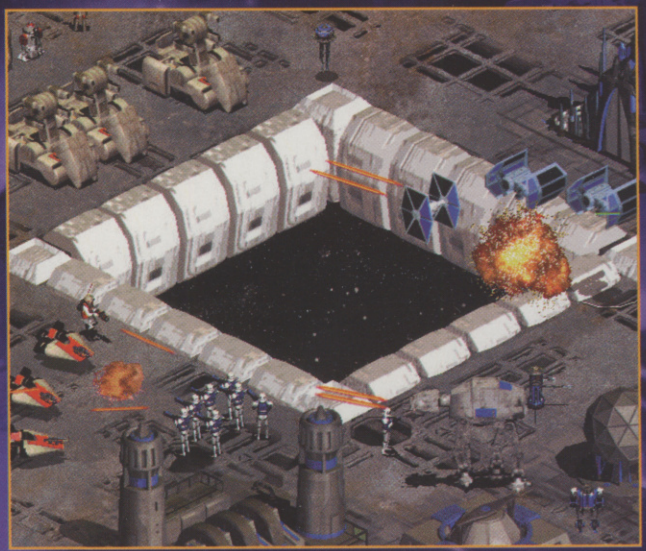
Format: PC
Out: Now
Developer: LucasArts
Publisher: LucasArts

With all the fanfare around Xbox and GameCube games, news of the latest PC Star Wars title has slipped out almost unnoticed. It seems that LucasArts has decided to take every gaming genre, stick the Star Wars logo on it and hope it sells. This time it's the turn of the real-time strategy genre.

Using the best-selling empire-builder Age of Empires' engine, it adds Jedi lore and air units to the mix. Thankfully, with LucasArts using such a tried and tested game engine, all it's had to do is focus on the gameplay elements. Thus hopefully managing to avoid the cock-up that was Force Commander. RTS with AT-ATs, X-Wings, Ion Cannons and battle droids? Should be great. When it's been released, they might even let us review it. Yay!

Age of Empires with Star Wars? Should be everything Force Commander wasn't

They've even tried recreating locations from all four movies



The annual Death Star barbecue had a tendency to get out of hand

Because she won't be wearing this, make sure you wear a condom.

You can't tell from looking at a girl if she has a Sexually Transmitted Infection.
So remember, when your kit comes off, make sure a condom goes on.

sex

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METAL GEAR SOLID 2: Sons Of Liberty

In a world exclusive preview, CVG uncovers the awesome secrets of MGS2

FORMAT: **PS2** COST: **£39.99** OUT: **NOVEMBER 16 (US) FEBRUARY 2002 (UK)** PLAYERS: **1** DEVELOPER: **KONAMI** PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**

Words and screenshots: Mike Cooper

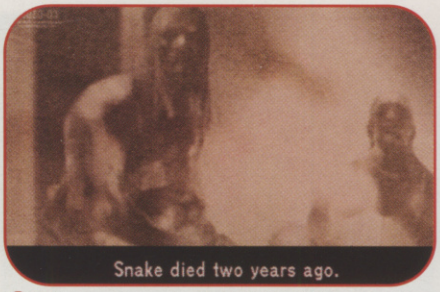
MEET RAIDEN, THE NEW SNAKE!

Every screenshot you've drooled over, paragraph you've read and rumour you've heard about MGS2 up 'til now has been a carefully orchestrated Konami ploy to hide one of the most shocking surprises in videogame history. So here it is: Snake isn't the main character in MGS2, and you play most of the game as an all-new member of Fox Hound!

SAYONARA SNAKE

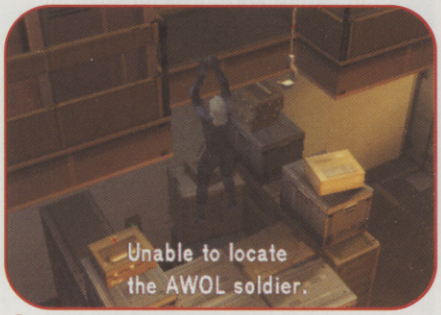
The adventure starts where the demo began, having you sneak through the tanker level as Snake. And after you've fought and defeated Olga there's still an hour of action aboard the ship. You're thrown into nerve-twitchingly intense gunfights in tight, dimly-lit corridors, using a digital camera to secretly snap Metal Gear Ray within a strict time limit, forced to disable a series of heavy explosives, and avoiding detection beneath deck in a room packed with blood-thirsty marines.

At the end of the stage, Revolver Ocelot hijacks Metal Gear Ray and bursts out of the hull, sinking the ship and killing Solid Snake in the process. Is Snake really dead and swimming with the fishes? Why did Ocelot steal Metal Gear Ray? What's going on? In fact, the tanker stage is an event that took place two years ago in the MGS2 story line, and merely acts as an opening chapter to the real meaty adventure that lies ahead. So wave goodbye to Solid Snake, and say hello to MGS2's new hero... Raiden. Holy sh*t!

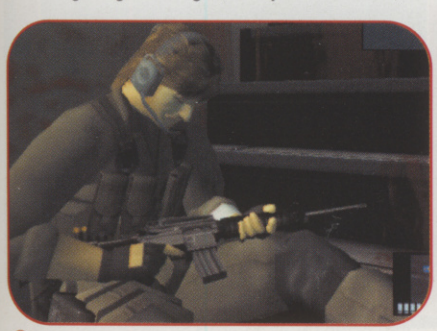


Is the legend really dead? All will become clear

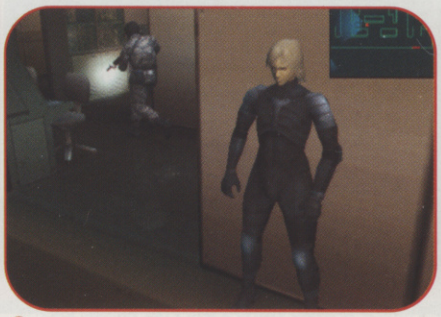
Playing as Raiden, you're outside and in daylight!



Unlike Snake, Raiden backflips to a hanging pose



Raiden meets Pliskin. Hmm, he looks familiar...



Raiden uses much the same sneaking tactics

Luckily Raiden's a lot more agile than Snake

SNAKE GOES OUT GUNS BLAZING

You may only play as Solid Snake on the opening tanker level, but this first stage offers three times the action available in the much vaunted demo. At least.

This prologue to the game's main adventure is one of the most intensely thrilling rides ever to hit a home console, and even when you've done it ten times, you'll still be coming back for more...

Some cool little changes have been added when you fight Olga. Now she'll turn this searchlight on you, making it impossible to see unless you bust the bulb with a blind shot

As we had all hoped, much more of the tanker is now open for exploration, including the crow's nest. Then head down to the bowels of the ship

Who could have made such a terrible mess?

Take a long hard look at the new face of MGS2

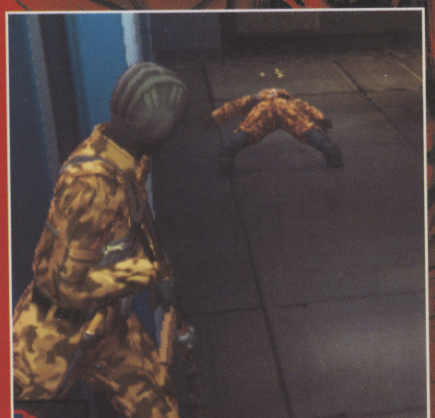
MYSTERY MAN UNVEILED

A giant decontamination facility called Big Shell has been set up to deal with the oil tanker spillage that took place two years ago, when Metal Gear Ray was stolen. And on a recent visit to the facility, the President gets kidnapped by a group of terrorists demanding a $30 billion ransom. So as a member of Fox Hound, Raiden is sent in to sort things out, and this is the location in which the complicated and thrilling plot of MGS2 unfolds.

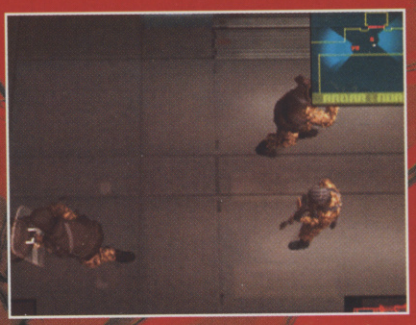
Raiden possesses all the abilities of Snake, except he's a lot more acrobatic and flamboyant – leaping over railings using Jackie Chan-esque backflips, and cart-wheeling instead of forward rolling. The other obvious difference is the fact that Raiden wears a mean black Skull Suit and sports a mop of shiny blond hair, which makes

CREEPING WITH THE ENEMY

No, your eyes are not deceiving you. Yes, you do get to run around disguised as a guard in a major section of the game. In turn you're able to avoid detection, and use your undercover abilities to solve cool objectives. Bok! And you even get to use a silenced AK. We're lovin' it, lovin' it, lovin' it.

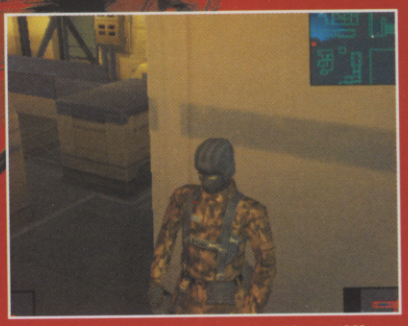


You take a peek at a guy you've just knocked out. But acting in an unusual manner – making noises, taking out other guards – will attract attention



Blending into the crowd. In evasion mode you can simply join in the patrols and become a part of the team. But don't bump into anyone

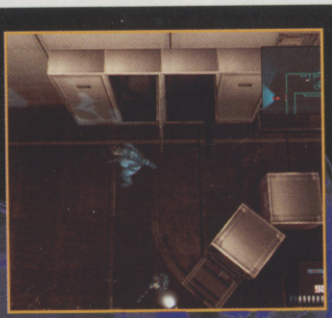
As you hang out with the other guards in the computer room, pay attention to what the caged parrot is saying, as it may give you some clues



If you don't carry the standard issue AK machine gun, the guards will get suspicious. So 'til you find one, you'll have to be careful

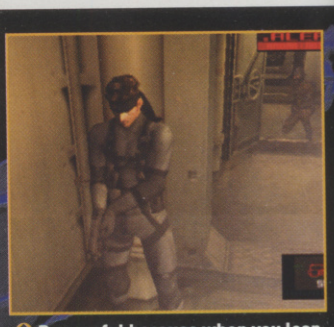
Running around as a part of a squad feels so sneaky, cheeky and cool that you'll struggle not to giggle like a schoolgirl

Instead of a scope, you now have a camera to take photos of Metal Gear Ray. But why not stop and take a few snaps along the way?



There's an unpleasant surprise in the far left cupboard. What could it be? Loads of tense moments like this crop up throughout the tanker stage

Thermal goggles come in handy in this dark corridor section of the ship. Plus it looks awesome and makes you feel like a serious bad-ass



Be careful because when you lean against one of the walls in this area, you can accidentally knock a pipe over and alert the guards

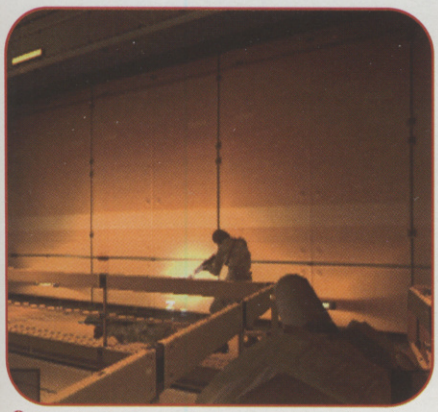
him look somewhere between Dante from Devil May Cry and Tidus from Final Fantasy X.

Sneaking in the shoes of another hero feels a little peculiar at first, but after a few minutes you'll soon feel ecstatic in the realisation that you're actually experiencing 100% MGS2 action with a cool new character.

CARDIAC ARREST

There are loads of bombs planted all over Big Shell that need deactivating and the clock is ticking away. But the twist is they're all hidden and your bomb detector can only pick up the smell of the explosives. (One of the terrorists is an explosives expert by the name of Fatman, and he puts a trademark scent on all his work.)

A mist appears on your radar showing you the general vicinity but not the exact location of the bombs. So, armed with Coolant to freeze the devices, you leg it around the facility, hunting out and disabling them, while engaging in some classic stealth antics.

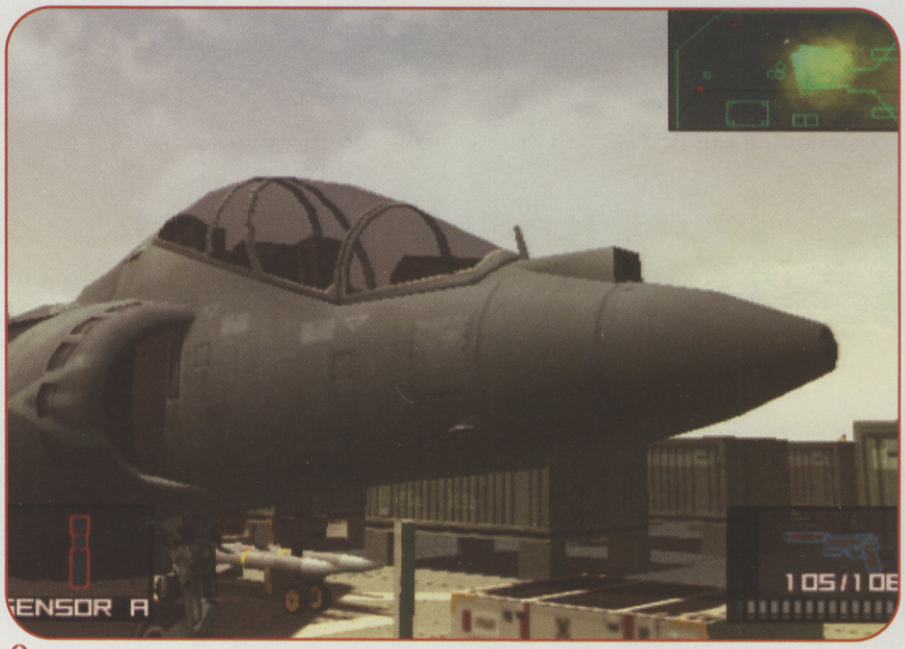


Big Shell is littered with countless cool areas

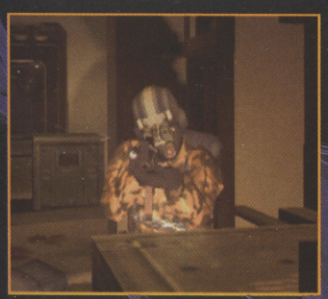
Throughout the game there are loads of heart-thumping challenges like this to overcome. You get to rescue Otacon's sister by swimming through flooded, mine-littered corridors, then protecting her from enemy fire using a sniper rifle as she shuffles along thin oil pipes towards the computer room.

Plus you're often faced with brain-teasing puzzles to solve, such as how to pick out your contact in a room full of hostages using only a directional mic. One area can only be accessed by enemies via a retina-scanning security device, and the solution involves the clever use of well-positioned jazz mags. How cool is that?!

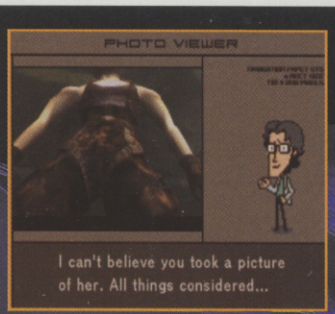
If a guard doesn't report in (because *you've* shot him in the head) a patrol will be sent out to investigate



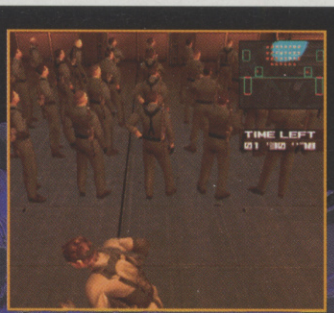
This harrier isn't just a pretty piece of scenery. Later on in the game it'll be peppering you with gunfire



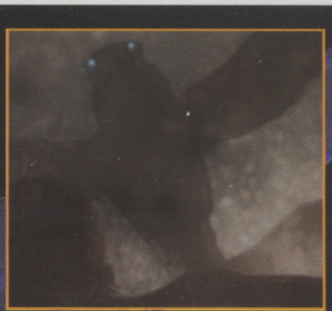
You're spotted and a stunning gunfight kicks off, but all you can see are the creepy lenses of their night goggles shining in the darkness



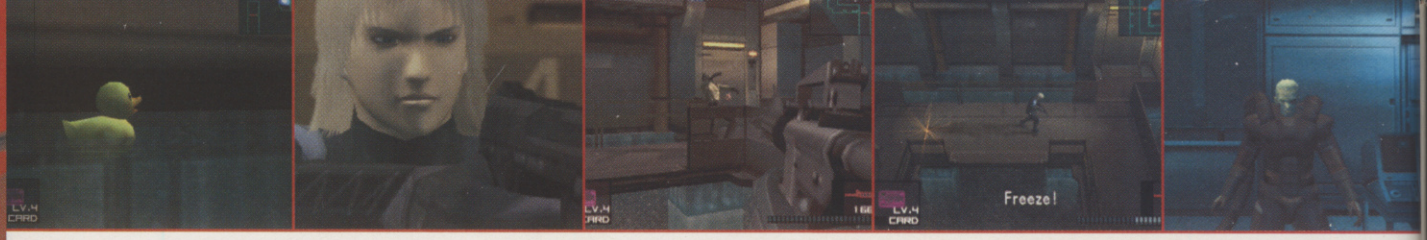
Take photos of Metal Gear Ray from four different angles, then load into a computer. Take a photo of Olga's naughty bits and make Otacon blush



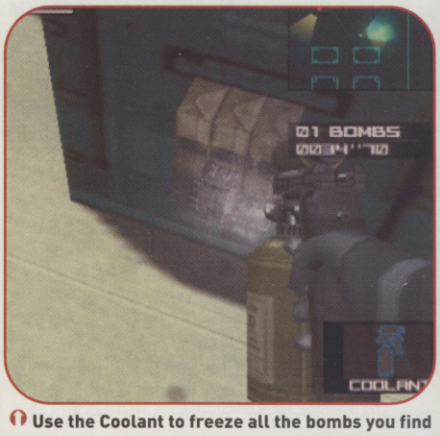
Snake takes the sneakiest route past the marines, who are watching a presentation. But tread on a noisy grate and it's game over



Revolver Ocelot nicks off with Metal Gear Ray and dives it into the sea in this stunning end sequence to the first section



The water effects in Metal Gear Solid 2 are stunning and unlike any ever seen on PS2. Truly impressive



Use the Coolant to freeze all the bombs you find

Fatman: a roller-blading, bomb-planting badass

Fortune goes nuts with her enormous weapon

BLOOD, BUGS, AND RUBBER DUCKS

The stunning effects and little details that fill MGS2 will make the hairs all over your body stand on end and give you goosebumps the size of bee stings in places you didn't think possible.

Seagull crap splats on the screen when you look up at a flock of birds; blood splatters in your eyes when you blast an enemy at close range; cockroaches scuttle and squish underfoot; flies buzz around you when you aquire dodgy rations; and the camera fogs up when you move from cold to hot.

And as for the swimming sections and water effects, you'll be lucky if your heart doesn't just stop beating as a result of the sheer excitement you feel when you first dive in and start exploring the debris-filled depths of Big Shell. A toy figure of Raven from the original MGS hangs in the water; papers, canisters and cans sway in the current; and a rubber duck bobs in one of the air holes. The list of marvellous tiny touches like these are seemingly endless throughout the entire MGS2 adventure, and they help create an environment unlike any you'll have experienced before.

JETS AND DRIPPING JUGULARS

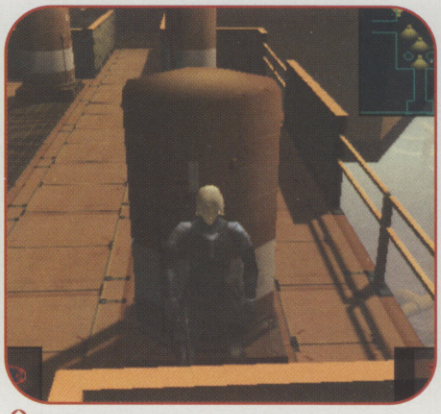
The twisty plot of MGS2 is as unpredictable as Man Utd on their current form, and you'll be frequently blown away by the revelations that unfold from start to finish. And along the way you come across and co-operate with a guy bearing a striking reseblence to Snake, going by the name of Pliskin. Could it be?

As you'd expect, the cast of villains that populate this monumental sequel comprise of some of the coolest characters imaginable, including Vamp, a nutty vampire who makes Blade look like a squidgy blood-sucking leech; Fatman, a blubbery roller-blading bomb expert; and Fortune, an Amazonian-looking lovely equipped with an electric bolt-throwing gun that's twice her size.

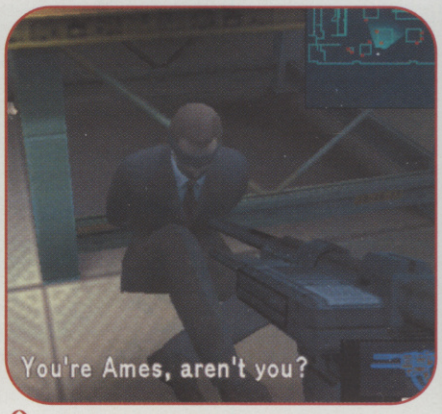
The battles that take place between you and the mean bosses in MGS2 are truly awesome. Especially the confrontation between you and Solidus Snake, who flies a Harrier and tears through the skies as you try to take him down with a Stinger. Meanwhile, the fight with Vamp will have your heart pumping faster than a Viagra-fuelled rabbit in Spring time. But it's the final battles in the last couple of hours of the game which are the best of all – although we won't give it all away just yet.

So, start getting excited, *very* excited, because MGS2 is complete and is possibly the best game you'll ever play. It really is *that* damned good. We kid you not.

The parcel room is a perfect spot for a shootout



Safely cross the gangway using a mine detector



Raiden gets to use all kinds of cool equipment

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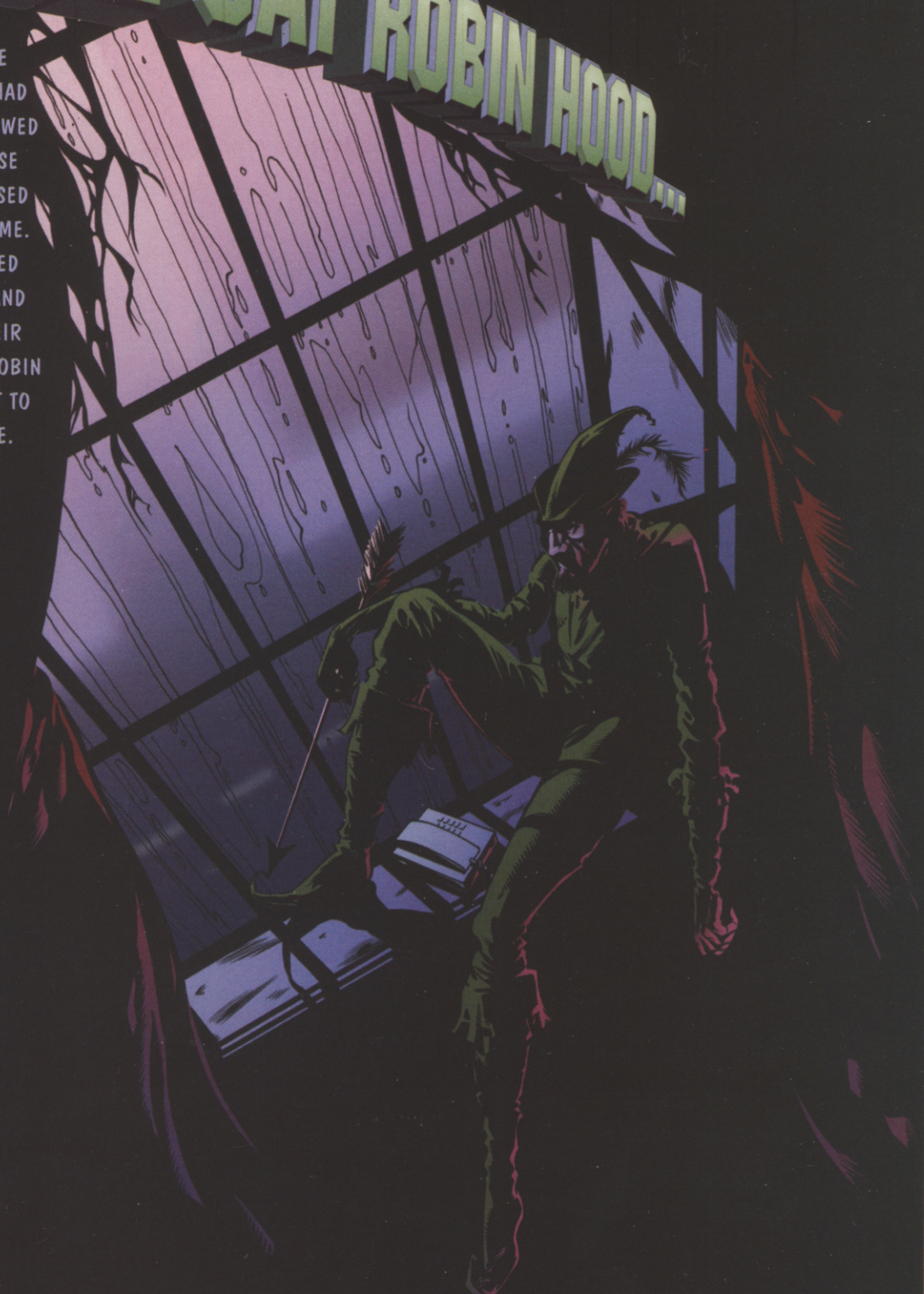
ALONE SAT ROBIN HOOD...

...AND WONDERED WHERE HIS BAND OF MERRY MEN HAD GOT TO. SOMETIMES HE ALLOWED HIMSELF TO THINK OF THOSE TIMES, THE WAY CROWDS USED TO CHEER AND CALL HIS NAME. HOW DISTANT IT ALL SEEMED NOW, NOW THAT DUO JAK AND DAXTER HAD INVENTED THEIR NEW FORM OF GREATNESS. ROBIN PICKED UP THE PHONE, JUST TO SEE IF ANYONE WAS THERE.

THE END.



NAUGHTY DOG

TIME FOR A NEW LEGEND.

PlayStation.2
THE THIRD PLACE

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PREVIEWS

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE 2: DOUBLE HELIX

FORMAT: **PC** OUT: **TBC** DEVELOPER: **RAVEN** PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

These days blowing body parts off terrorists and laughing maniacally as the gore slides down walls may be seen as even less politically correct than ever. But then US developer Raven never did pay much attention to the rules – they even managed to achieve the near-impossible and make a decent Star Trek title. So any game heavily influenced by someone who made a heap of money killing people for real (mercenary John Mullins) isn't going to be at all controversial. Of course not.

BRAINS BEFORE BRAWN

Realism is the name of the game here, so if you're a run-and-gun sort of player then most of the gore and body parts that fly may well be your own. A little bit of planning and stealth here and there will make your life much easier. And longer. Apart from the new terrorist-infested locations like Colombia, an ocean liner, a prison and an airport, the storyline has you dealing with biochemical shenanigans – topical or what?

But as good as these new levels look, they're not all that has been improved. Remember the outrage over how many different body parts you could shoot in the last game? Raven listened to its critics and agreed – 26 blatantly wasn't enough. So this time you have 36 different places to shoot 'em. Cap a bad guy off-centre in the head and part of the skull and brains fly off and decorate the walls behind. A bit like the TV DIY show Changing Rooms, but for psychos. And just to keep all the sickos (like CVG's 'Shotgun' Walker) happy, you can still blow all four limbs and the head off before the torso hits the floor – the trademark of a master SoF player.

Um, bad move. If you're this close you're about a millisecond from death

"Decorate walls with brains. DIY for psychos"

Don't you know green camo is out of fashion?

SILENT BUT VIOLENT

These stealth elements have allowed Raven to go to town with the detail. In most first-person shooters you can crouch, but in SoF2 you can get on your belly, crawl though long grass and see it part in front of you. As well as that, every surface you walk over makes a different noise, plus you get a sound gauge that lets you know how loud you are – and guards react to that.

Subtle. I guess you decided against stealth

DUMB AND DUMBER

The terrorists won't just stand there gormlessly if you shoot one of their mates, they're going to go and get help till they outgun you. But just how smart they are depends on what level you are on. Some of the earlier, dumber terrorists just blast away aimlessly, while others will try to outflank your position and take you down from behind with heavier firepower. Nasty.

See, these guys are dumb – they're more worried about how cool they look than the fact that your gun is bigger

Clever. Even if you take down these two terrorists, forces are gathering in the next room, ready to blast you

Breaking out of prison is pretty tough, but trying to break in is just insane

Check out the broken glass from the first shotgun round. Nice touch

Using a knife is stealthy but messy. See, this thoughtful victim has even got an apron on, so he won't get his blood on his shirt. Good thinking, mate, but to be honest, the apron won't help...

Make too much noise early on and an entire platoon of terrorists will be on your tail.

And the missions are varied too. You can go from rescuing hostages to gathering intelligence or the carnage of search and destroy. If that wasn't enough, there's a mission editor in there where you specify the kind of mission, terrain and parameters and the game designs a level for you – in other words, infinite levels.

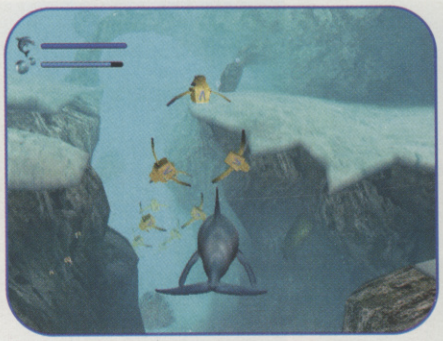
SoF2 is gory and violent, but it's realistic. There aren't just sprays of blood when you bag someone, there are body parts flying off and blood splashing properly rather than sprays of pixels. The weapons are all real world, so it's Uzis rather than lightning guns and you can even have different weapons in each hand. Cool. We'll have more news and a score on the gore soon.

CVG RECKONS

Gives an extra element to a regular first-person shooter – that it's so real it's painful to touch. Our trigger fingers are itching already. Les

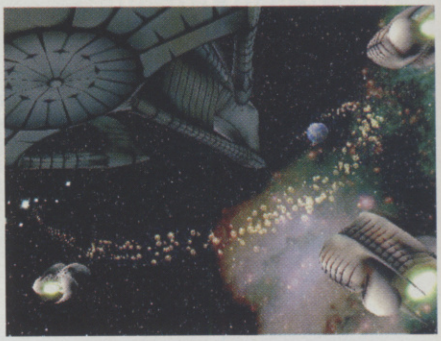
"You're gonna have to think like a dolphin"

Light the incense sticks and grow some dreads because the world's most New Age videogames star returns for a fresh round of Earth Mother-hugging on PS2. Ecco was a major success on Dreamcast and the game helps lead the charge of PS2 Sega conversions. It promises to be just as epic and hypnotic, but this time round there are bonus features and important gameplay tweaks.



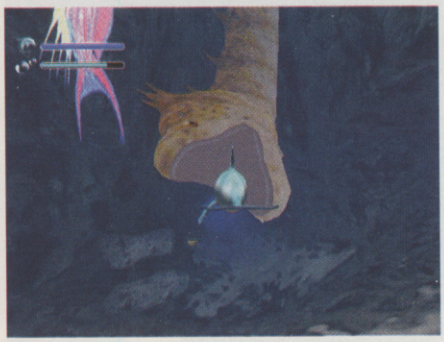
Swim through all the rings to open locked doors. Don't ask us why, just do as you're told!

Starwing? No, but space travel is key to the plot



AN EASIER FISH TO FRY

Ecco plays just like it did on Dreamcast, with the fateful young dolphin swimming his way through four enormous chapters of a future Earth's troubled timeline. Ecco's beauty lies in the way you have to adapt your brain to think like a dolphin in order to solve the puzzles. On Dreamcast this task proved too much for some, prompting criticism of a punishing difficulty level. So now there's a whole school of new additions to help Ecco along on his journey and to prevent you throwing your pad through the screen in a rage.



Getting eaten by a moray eel won't save Earth

GLYPH 'N' CHIPS

Stony glyphs return and there are many more of them now, hinting heavily at the solutions to trickier puzzles and some of them even triggering cutscenes showing you exactly what to do. All of which leaves you more time to explore and fully enjoy the jaw-dropping, gorgeous aquatic environments.

There's also a new in-game hint menu to review tips and clues if you get really stuck. And, while it doesn't do anything for the gameplay, a brand new gallery feature lets you swim about and marvel at in-game artwork and unlocked secret pictures from each level, adding extra incentive to complete the game thoroughly.

The whole Ecco experience has been tweaked to near-perfection and anyone who fancies a hardcore challenge set in one of the most beautiful game worlds ever created should definitely put this on their fishy wish list.

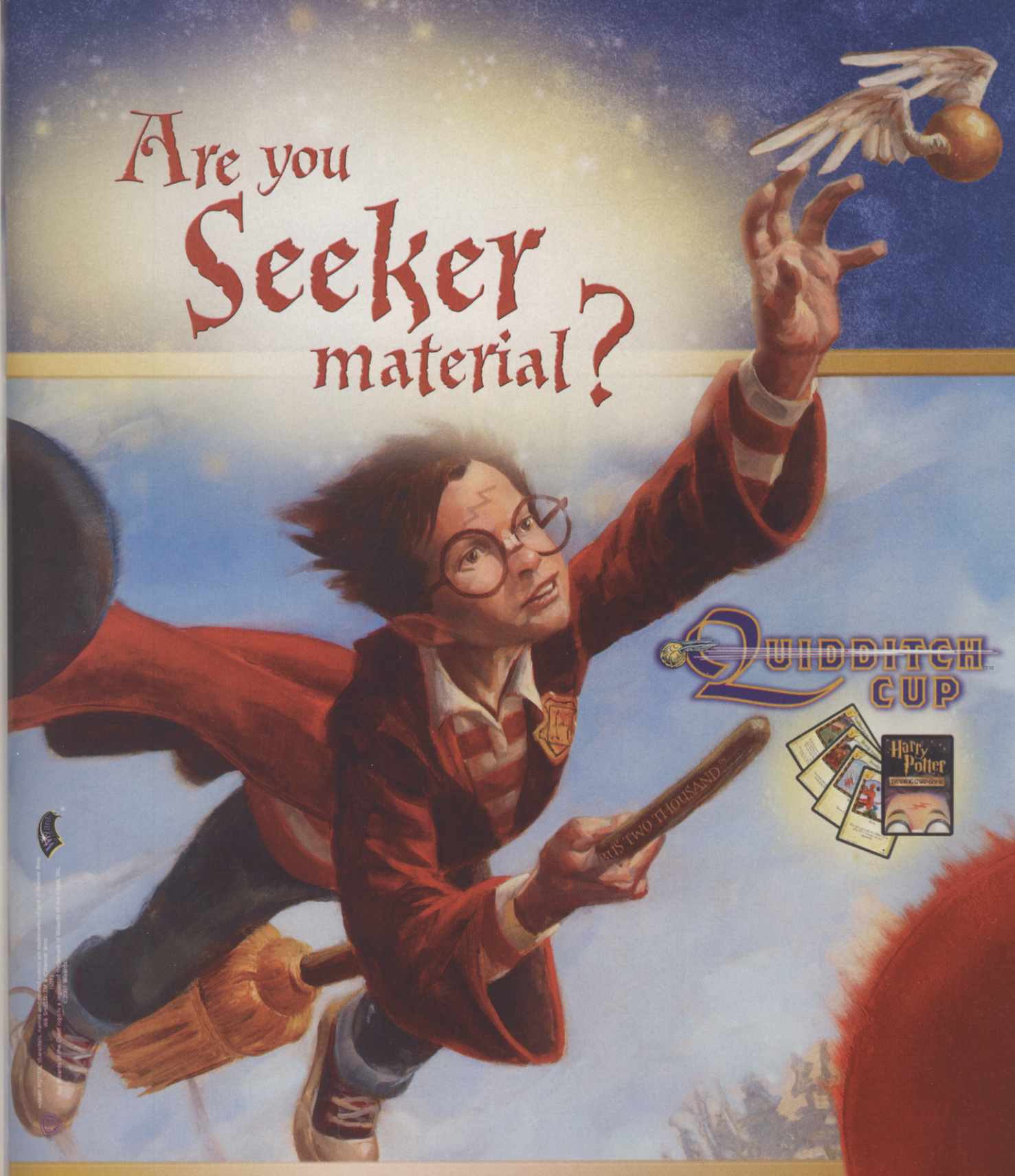
ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **DECEMBER** DEVELOPER: **APPALOOSA** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Ecco is the fated saviour of the world – you can tell by the stars on his bonce

CVG RECKONS

Hardly a major overhaul, but the refined Ecco is sure to be a stand-out title and deserve a second look. Lee



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Or the know-how to challenge other wizards using potions, charms, and creatures? The **Harry Potter**™ trading card game tests your magical abilities, and all-new ***Quidditch Cup*** cards let you and your friends take your game to new heights!

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THE MUMMY™ RETURNS

GOOD

~~VS~~ Or

EVIL

Go With Evil. You can hit restart When you get to hell.

As Rick you'll have a cool arsenal of swords, shotguns and revolvers.

As Imhotep, you'll use brute strength and have the awesome power to cast spells.

Your quest to defeat the Scorpion King takes you to London, Cairo, and the Hamunaptra ruins.

Wanna be bad? Good. In the Mummy Returns video game, you can be heroic Rick O' Connell or evil Imhotep. But either way you'll be facing pygmy mummies, Anubis warriors and mummified baboons, bringing all the soul-sucking fun of the movie to life in eye-popping next-gen graphics. Survive all that, and you get to battle the Scorpion King.
Pray there's an afterlife.

PlayStation.2

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Import game supplied by Computer Exchange (Tel: 020 7916 8440)

Certain Pikmin will help break down stony walls, but only if you fatten them up with plenty of nectar and grass to make them strong enough

"It's like commanding a cute, idiotic army!"

Pikmin are your friends. They are the gentle, ant-like plant life of the world you've crashed your spacecraft onto. Through the kindness of their hearts they'll help rescue all the broken bits of your ship. Alternatively, think of Pikmin as tools. They're the brainless indigenous species of the crash site, there to be worked hard and occasionally sacrificed in order to get you back home. Whatever attitude you develop towards them, rest assured these red, blue and yellow bleeders will be taking over your life pretty soon.

PIKMIN

FORMAT: **GAMECUBE** OUT: **NOW (JAPAN) TBC (UK)** DEVELOPER: **NINTENDO** PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**

NATURE NURTURE

Playing as a spaceman called Captain Orima, you have to collect and nurture groups of Pikmin and chaperone them into fixing your ship and assisting your escape from the planet you've been marooned on.

Starting with just one critter, you have to build up an army of them by sending out your first Pikmin to retrieve the tokens dotted about. Return them to one of the strange tripod things that follow you around and Pikmin seeds burst forth. Once these have bloomed, Orima can pluck them and your army begins to grow.

EAT YOUR GREENS

There are three main types of Pikmin, and each has different stages of growth shown by flowers sprouting from their heads. By feeding them grass and nectar you can make them faster and stronger. The different Pikmin types mean you have to use different combinations of them to break down walls, swim through water and attack the cute but deadly garden pests ready to chomp on your squad.

There's also a daily time limit and you have to try to solve as many puzzles and raise as many Pikmin as you can before each night falls. Fail to return your horde of vegetable workers to base and you'll lose them to the night crawlers.

Pikmin is difficult to grasp, and not just because of the Japanese text. The whole idea is so unlike anything else you'll just sit in slack-jawed wonder at the genius of it all. Expect full updates as the UK launch approaches.

Some levels have multiple objectives

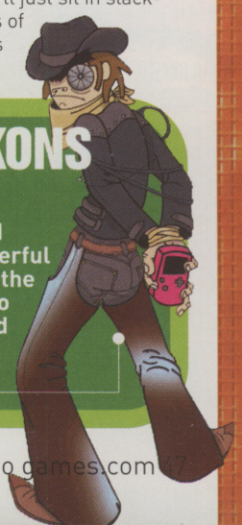
Check out our army of Pikmin! Control them!

Take tokens to the tripod to grow Pikmin seeds

Dead Pikmin spirits float off. Don't feel guilty

CVG RECKONS

One of those weird, original and undoubtedly wonderful concepts that only the genius of Miyamoto and Nintendo could come up with. We like. Lee



This import game supplied by Computer Exchange (Tel: 020 7916 8440)

"Like a beautiful but slightly twisted dream"

In the darkness of your castle prison, you feel along the cold stone walls and desperately try to find a handhold, switch, or some clue to help you escape. And getting out isn't your only worry: you've got an ethereal and simple-minded princess called Yorda to protect from shadowy demons. Let them take her and you're doomed to remain imprisoned. Beat them away and you might just make it out alive.

Yorda's pretty dim. You can really yank her about

Protect Yorda from the menacing black shadows

ICO

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **SPRING 2002** DEVELOPER: **SONY** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

PULL YOUR DREAM GIRL

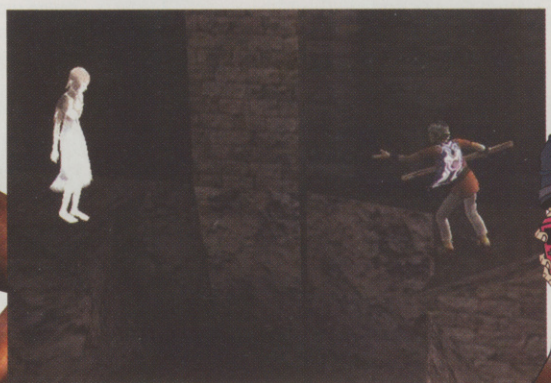
In PS2's most original game yet you play Ico, a young boy cast out by his village for being born with horns (ouch). Imprisoned in a huge castle, he dreams of Yorda, a beautiful but strange young girl in peril, who turns out to be a princess (of course) who's being pursued by an evil queen. He sets off to find and rescue Yorda and, hand in hand, they must tackle a series of intense puzzles using teamwork to pull levers and switches, heading deeper and deeper into the castle, room by trap-filled room.

It's these puzzles and the dream-like way they are presented that makes Ico stand out. The camera is set at key points in each room but pans around as you explore. It's so smooth and the transitions from one view to another are so fluid that it gives the slow pace of exploration a real boost. The graphics are bleached out and dreamy, so the whole experience feels unlike anything you've played before.

Yorda is also being pursued by the Queen's sinister shadows, so Ico must beat them away before they suck her into their dimension. This simple but intense combat provides a welcome change of pace and yomping around the castle protecting Yorda soon becomes gripping stuff.

Check out our horny little hero as he swings through one of the gorgeously detailed environments in Ico

Yorda clearly never did long jump at school



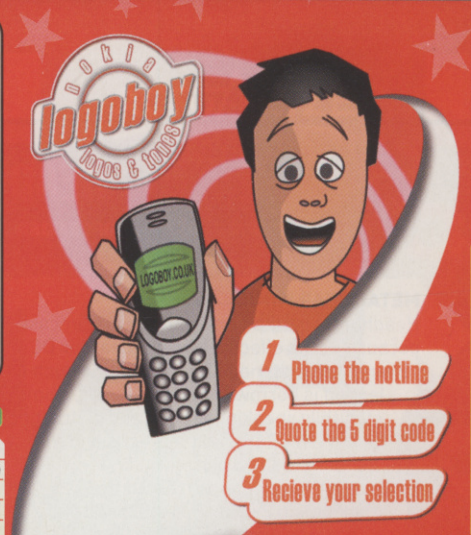
The rope swing: traditional but it works great

CVG RECKONS

Original, unusual and so dreamy that it'll become a cult classic. But will the empty environments and generally more laid back pace appeal to everyone? **Lee**

NewTones....

N Sync	Gone	61367
Bell & Spurling	Sven, Sven, Sven	61265
S Club 7	Have You Ever	61369
WestLife	Queen Of My Heart	61322
Oxide & Neutrino	They Only Wanna Know U Cos	61319
Limp Bizkit	Boiler	61255
Daft Punk	Harder Better Faster Stronger	61220
City High	What would you do?	61198
Five	Closer To Me	61280
Atomic Kitten	You Are	61374



Pop Tones

61197	Michael Jackson • *U Rock My World*	61175	Kylie • *Cant Get U Outta My Head*
61170	Victoria Beckham • *Innocent Girl*	61150	Sophie Ellis Bextor • *Take me home*
61053	Atomic Kitten • *Eternal Flame*	61211	Uncle Kracker • *Follow Me*
61027	Robbie Williams • *Eternity*	61194	Alien Ant Farm • *Smooth Criminal*
61220	DJ Otzi • *Hey Baby*	61091	Nelly Futardo • *Turn off the light*
61253	Jennifer Lopez • *Im Real*	60163	Wheatus • *Teenage Dirtbag*
61205	Liberty • *Thinking It Over*	60185	Shaggy • *Angel*
61141	Geri Halliwell • *Scream if you wanna..*	61370	Shaggy • *Dance & Shout*
61225	Britney Spears • *Im A Slave 4 U*	61166	Shaggy • *Luv Me, Luv Me*
61287	iio • *Rapture*	60128	Gorillaz • *Clint Eastwood*
61004	Pink Mya etc. • *Lady Marmalade*	61199	Gorrilaz • *Rock Da House*
61315	Riva & Danni Minogue • *Who Do You Love*	60045	Limp Bizkit • *Rollin*
61193	Steps • *Chain Reaction*	60129	Hear Say • *Pure and Simple*
61379	The Charlatans • *A Man Needs To....*	60184	S Club 7 • *Dont Stop Movin*
60047	Bob The Builder • *Mambo No. 5*	61240	Gabrielle • *Don't need the Sun to Shine*

R'n'B

61181	Mary J. Blige • *Family Affair*
61264	Destinys Child • *Emotion*
61064	Eve • *Let me blow your mind*
61236	Usher • *You Got It Bad*
61382	Macy Gray • *Sexual Revoultion*
61003	Brandy • *Another day in Paradise*
60157	Usher • *Pop your collar*
60174	Gaberille • *Out of Reach*
60117	Destinys Child • *Survivor*
61037	Destinys Child • *Bootylicious*
60186	Sisqo • *Thong Song*
61217	Mariah Carey • *Never to far*

RAP

61223	Afro Man • *Because I Got High*
61261	2 Pac • *Letter To My Unborn*
61191	Ludacris • *Area Codes*
61050	Wyclef • *Perfect Gentleman*
61272	D 12 • *Fight Music*
61266	2 Pac • *Do For Love*
61377	Babba Sparxx • *Ugly*
61383	DMX • *Who We Be*
61285	Blu Cantrell • *Hit Em Up Style*
60060	Out Kast • *Miss Jackson*
61363	Dr Dre • *Bad Intentions*
60034	Eminem • *Stan*

XmasTones

We Wish U A Merry	61310
Silient Nights	61307
Red Nose Rain Deer	61306
Jingle Bells	61302
Frosty The Snowman	61308
Oh Christmas Tree	61304
Good King Wenceslas	61298
Bethlehem	61305
White Christmas	61294

FilmTones...

Mission Impossible	60044
James Bond	60205
Star Trek	61130
God Father	60127
The Exorcist	60223
Pretty Woman	60213
Great Escape	60212
Italian Job	60207
Star Wars	60204

Football

60240	Glory Glory • *Man U / Spurs*	60232	Here we go, here we go • *All*
60164	You'll never walk alone • *Liverpool*	60238	Vindaloo • *All*
60226	Blue is the colour • *Chelsea*	60137	Match of the Day • *Theme*
60239	Forever blowing bubbles • *West Ham*	60212	Great Escape • *All*
60230	Daydream believer • *Sunderland*	60211	Dam Busters • *All*
61250	3 Lions • *All*	61153	God save the Queen • *All*

Dance

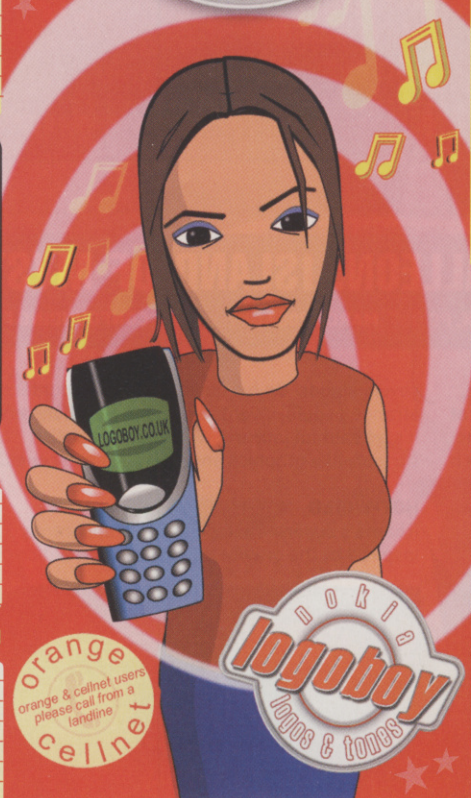
61146	Superman Lovers • *Starlight*
61214	Jean Jaques Smoothie • *2 People*
61324	Basement Jaxx • *Wheres Your Head*
61299	Groove Armada • *My Friend*
61371	Train • *Something More*
61072	Ian Van Dahl • *Castles in the sky*
61178	Kosheen • *Hide you*
61070	Roger Sanchez • *Another Chance*
60020	Darude • *Sand Storm*
61364	Fragma • *Say That You Are Here*
60139	Modjo • *Lady*
60276	Daft Punk • *One more time*

Garage

61373	Wideboys • *Sambucca*
61149	Ed Case • *Who*
61231	Misteeq • *One Night Stand*
61074	So Solid Crew • *21 Seconds*
61160	De Nada • *Love you anyway*
61258	So Solid Crew • *They Dont Know*
61200	Genius Crew • *Course Bruv*
61235	The Streets • *Has It Come To This?*
61005	Pied Piper • *Do you really like it*
61279	B15 Project • *Feels So Good*
61286	Daniel Beddingfield • *Get Thtu This*
61058	Sticky ft.Ms Dynamite • *Boo*

BOYBANDS

61375	Blue	• *If You Come Back*
61172	Blue	• *Too Close*
60274	Blue	• *All Rise*
61368	N* Sync	• *Tearing Up My Heart*
61068	N* Sync	• *POP*
61144	O Town	• *All or Nothing*
61063	Damage	• *So what if I*
61002	BB Mak	• *Still on your Side*
61062	Backstreet Boys	• *More than that*
61186	Westlife	• *When your looking like..*
60162	Westlife	• *Uptown Girl*
61078	Five	• *Let's Dance*



BrandLogos

POLO SPORT 10733	CK 10758	10764
10822	CHANEL 30037	RA 10721	diesel 10911	adidas 10703
ICEBERG JEANS 10882	MOSCHINO 10953	VERSACE 10883	MANGO 30033	DKNY JEANS 10768
M 13959	Lamborghini 30510	Ferrari 10921	PORSCHE 911 30509	TT 10895

FilmLogos

THE X FILES 11832	X-MEN 30488	STAR WARS 11753
A KNIGHT'S TALE 30253	TOMB RAIDER 30251	ALIEN 11795	ANGEL 30476	AUSTIN POWERS 11788
SHREK 30237	007 11799	BLADE RUNNER 11835	FIGHT CLUB 30268	SCARFACE 30450
The Godfather 11784	Buffy 30171	LORD OF THE RINGS 30441	MATRIX 11760	SCREAM 11869
reservoir dogs 30202	SCARY MOVIE 2 30225	TERMINATOR 30141	STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION 30086	Harry Potter 30017

MusicLogos

geri halliwell 30238	ATOMIC KITTEN 13264	DR DRE 30054
BRITNEY SPEARS 30256	destinyschild 30093	5 16005	Limp Bizkit 13178	Gorillaz 16014
DJ 30248	Wheatus 30249	2PAC 13262	MADONNA 13161	EMINEM 13190
ELVIS 16000	OutKast 30100	Robbie 13263	Chemical Brothers 30233	Kylie 13162
STEPS 30164	Shaggy 13292	Five 13151	NIRVANA 16040	Jamiroquai 16035
USHER 30043	*NSYNC 30106	DMX 13268	16001	MICHAEL JACKSON 13105

CartoonLogos

KickASS 11868	11811	30593
SPIDERMAN 30479	30087	10213	The Simpsons! 11067	11610
11058	TIGGER 30244	DISNEY 30521	11149	Chicken Run 11171
Tweety 30146	30540	11039	11073	Dragonball 30588
Sylvester 30145	Winnie 11041	Rugrats 30040	11053	HONG KONG 11877

Favourites

VERY HOT STUFF 30504	30524	30595
PS2 THE THIRD PLACE 30122	PlayStation 12142	Nintendo 12141	SEGA 12144	Start 30208
The Master 30392	U CHEEKY monkey 30505	apocalypse 30412	CHILLIN OUT 30502	30600
30585	TAKE NO 30507	Hotshot 30554	PLAYGIRL 10832	PLAYBOY 10831
casanova 30568	sexbomb 30501	FREESTYLER 30417	DJ 30556	BECKS 30471
KEEP ROLLIN' 30563	JUST DID IT! 30242	PARTY 30591	12877	30497

Footie

Arsenal 11953	GOD BLESS AMERICA 30529	30490
LIVERPOOL 11981	MANCHESTER UNITED 11950	LEEDS 11974	Wales 11930	30481
CHELSEA 11957	ROVERS 12000	TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR 12016	IRELAND 11932	Partners In CRIME 30427
ASTON VILLA 11954	The Saints 12039	GLASGOW RANGERS 30513	ENGLAND 11959	12315
Hammers 12086	NEWCASTLE UNITED 11986	Celtic 30542	SCOTLAND 11923	10442

Wrestling

		30105
WWF ATTITUDE 30474	STONE COLD STEVE AUSTIN 17511	CHYNA 11724
Undertaker AMERICAN BADASS 30213	ROCK 30473	SMACKDOWN 30205

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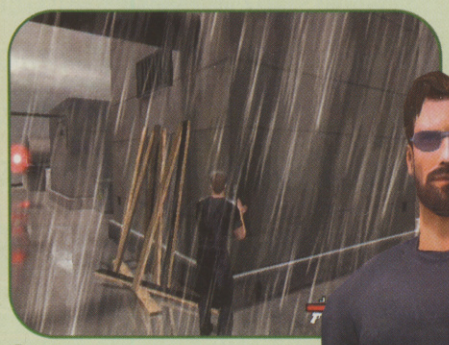
HEADHUNTER

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **DECEMBER** DEVELOPER: **SEGA** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Barely rested from his Dreamcast crime-fighting Metal Gear-alike, Jack Wade is ready to do it all over again on PS2. Unlike this month's other big Sega port, Ecco, Headhunter doesn't feature any refinements besides slightly nicer visuals. Hardly a problem though, considering the game's a solid action adventure.



This is more cartoony than MGS

Lock onto and switch between targets

Jack gets ready to waste this goon

METAL GEAR MIMIC

Headhunter worked brilliantly on Dreamcast because it was effectively Metal Gear for DC. Everything that made Kojima's game such a legend is borrowed in Headhunter, from stealthily sneaking around and distracting guards to VR training missions and a double-crossing plot.

Our major concern about the PlayStation 2 conversion is that it will pale into insignificance next to Metal Gear 2, which is due for release around the same time, and that PS2 owners can play the original Metal Gear to see this type of game done much better. That said, however,

The level is chilly but Jack's shades are cooler

Headhunter does have some cool new features, like when Jack straddles his motorbike, and is rather more tongue-in-cheek than Solid Snake's po-faced drama.

CVG RECKONS

Undoubtedly a good game but who will choose this over Metal Gear 2? Lee

GALLEON: ISLAND OF MYSTERY

FORMAT: **GAMECUBE, XBOX, PC** OUT: **MARCH 2002** DEVELOPER: **CONFOUNDING FACTOR** PUBLISHER: **INTERPLAY**

It's infuriating buying a brand new console, only to find the same old games released at launch. We hunger for something to show off the might of our shiny new beast. Galleon is just such a game. The control system is so advanced that no console on Earth could cope with it. Until now.

Galleon tells the story of swashbuckling Rhama's adventures exploring seven islands. On his quest Rhama encounters strange people, inventive puzzles and monsters. It's a beautiful journey, with vibrantly stylish cartoon-like graphics and gorgeous cutscenes.

HOT-WIRED

Rhama's superhero abilities were apparently inspired by the gravity-defying wire-Fu antics of the likes of Jet Li. The control system is instinctive and effortlessly duplicates such free-flowing movement. You'll believe you can do anything with Rhama, although handling his co-star Faith and martial arts sidekick Mihoko will take a little more practice.

Rhama's breath-mint jibes didn't go down well

Evil baddie Jabez by name, jabber by nature. Put it away, please

CVG RECKONS

Galleon has taken ages to sail into port, but take one look at it you'll know why. Maura

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Mein gott. It could have all been so different. No 1966 World Cup, no legendary 5-1 win in Germany and no Man Utd whopping Bayern Munich in the Champions League final. We would all be driving round in VW Beetles, eating bizarre sausages and would have to grow very dodgy moustaches (and that's just the girls). Yes, if Hitler's evil plan to raise an army of the undead (or should that be Hundead) wasn't thwarted by BJ Blazkowicz in 1943, World War II would have ended slightly differently.

HALF-LIFE WITH NAZIS

Your life as BJ begins in the dungeons of the castle, where you have to break out and try to stop the Nazi masterplan succeeding. Creeping through the basement of the castle, wasting guards quietly 'til you build up enough weapons and ammo to go on the offensive is damned atmospheric. In the first few seconds you get to waste a mad scientist who is torturing a colleague, but that switch on the wall is too tempting to resist so you usually end up frying the poor sod yourself.

From there you heroically blaze your way up into the castle, bust out into grounds, escape down a cable car to a village, before being directed into a graveyard. Which is where all hell breaks loose. Quite literally. Until then it's just a matter of blazing away at German troops with handguns, machine-guns and sniper rifles in a variety of visually stunning locations (it uses the Quake 3 engine after all).

But from the graveyard onwards you're face to face with Hitler's undead zombie army, which is hell-bent on killing everything they come across. You, Germans, whoever. And then there are the bosses – just wait 'til you come face to face with the likes of fire-breathing demons.

After several hours play, we can assure you that one-player RTCW is shaping up to be every bit as tense and atmospheric an experience as Half-Life and had us rooted to our seats. Throw in a rock-solid multiplayer mode (made by a different developer) and you'll understand why id is so confident of success on PC that work has already begun on a PS2 version.

German snipers hide in the towers and are a pain

Wow! Now that's attention to detail. Who needs zombies when you've got a secret weapon like this

RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN

FORMAT: **PC** OUT: **TBC** DEVELOPER: **GRAY MATTER/NERVE/ID** PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Let the Germans and zombies fight, then you pick off the winners from a distance

Just because the zombies are down, don't count them out – they can still get up and attack

"Creepy and cool – like Half-Life with Nazis"

The multiplayer demo impressed us so much we went to the US to see the one-player. Verdict? Wow!

CVG RECKONS

May not revolutionise the genre like Wolfenstein 3D, but this is shaping up to be something very special indeed. Les

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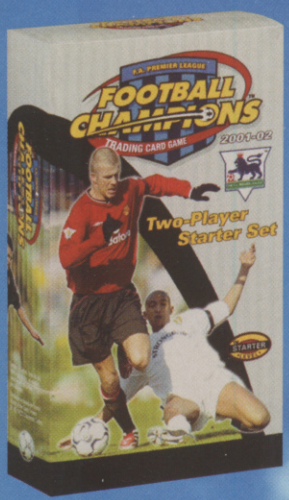

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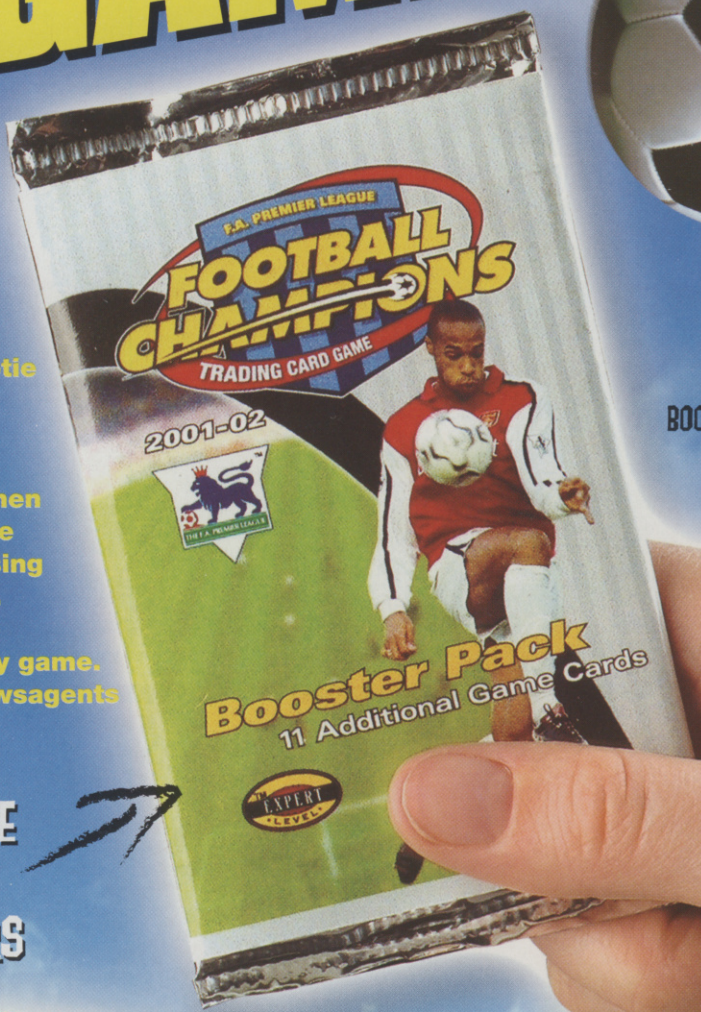

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UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2001/02

FORMAT: **PS2 /PC** OUT: **DECEMBER** DEVELOPER: **SILICON DREAMS** PUBLISHER: **TAKE TWO**

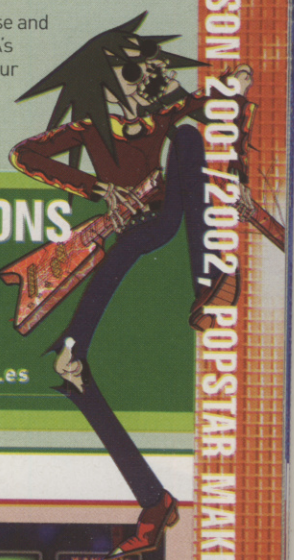
If ever a game proved that marketing people know nothing, this is it. Someone insisted that releasing this before Christmas, head to head with the latest ISS, FIFA and This Is Football, is a great idea. But you'd think that it'd be smart to release it in March, when the Champions League becomes the most important sporting event and gets the most coverage on TV would be smart. Er?

Anyway, in UCL the finest league teams in Europe (and Liverpool), battle it out for the title. But if you support teams like The Saints (whose only chance of getting into Europe is if they build a Channel Tunnel in Southampton), then you can create your own team and see how they fare. Some neat camera tricks mean you can zoom in as close or far away from the action as you want in the game and in the replays.

Well it could be Jaap Stam but that would mean this is already out of date as Utd kicked him out

No chance of a Treble this year then

While it lacks some of the finesse and moves of ISS, the depth of UEFA's modes and the chance to put your team in Europe may see it through the deluge of footie games safely.



CVG RECKONS

Not as hardcore as ISS or glam as FIFA, and released too early. Solid-looking footie sim, though. **Les**

POPSTAR MAKER

FORMAT: **PSONE** OUT: **DECEMBER** DEVELOPER: **EIDOS** PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

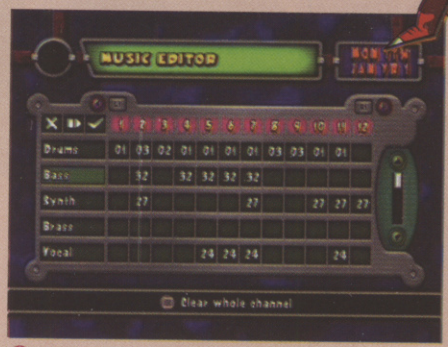
Train your troupe to get them to dance in time

Imagine a life where girls fainted wherever you went – like being Robbie Williams or Eminem. Sweeeet! But if you want the really big bucks, management is where it's at. You may not get the fame, but if you're successful you'll feel like nothing less than an egomaniac pop god. A very rich one at that.

POP PIMP

Popstar Maker gives you the chance to massage a band of young hopefuls into stars. As their manager, it's your job to dress, train and style your pretty pop puppets so that they make you as much cash as is humanly possible. Everything from marketing budgets to planning and releasing albums is thrown into the mix – it's a pretty deep strategy sim for PSone, albeit one that due to its subject matter is more likely appeal to certain gamers.

Your band won't sing if they're overworked



Making your own choons is by far the best bit

Like two games in one, there's also a music mixing element where you mix and create songs for your band to perform. There are thousands of different samples (from drumbeats to horn sections and vocals) to create your own three-minute pop wonders. Luckily for the tone deaf, the quality of your musical creation has no real effect on your group's success.

CVG RECKONS

Aimed at a very specific market, but this looks like it'll hit the pop-loving spot for teeny-bopping gamers of all ages. **Lee**

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FORMAT: XBOX **OUT:** MARCH 14 ONWARDS **WORDS:** MIKE COOPER **SCREENSHOTS:** MICROSOFT

MEET THE STARS OF XBOX

CVG plays over 20 exclusive Xbox games at XO1 in Cannes – and hangs out with the superstars of the future

DEAD OR ALIVE 3 OUT: MARCH 14

Each character moves with brilliant fluidity, making the action look truly alive

If the character models don't make you pass out with pleasure, the arenas will

It's a fact: violence is beautiful. No beat 'em up has ever felt as smooth and looked as sexy as DOA3.

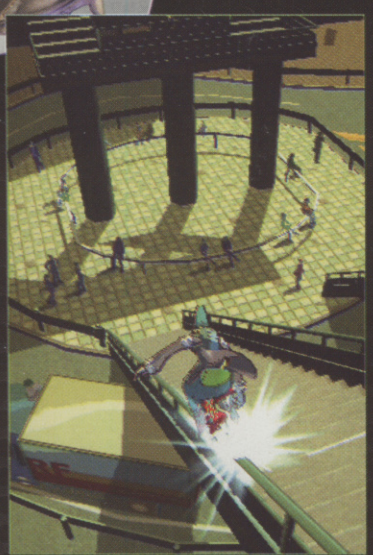
You select Ayane, step onto a sun-drenched beach and face off against a beret-wearing newcomer called Bayman. He storms at you but you block and counter with a swift reversal move that smashes the guy hard into the glimmering sea. As you blitz one another with awesome onslaughts, both characters' body parts twist and react with amazing realism. A kick to the leg makes the opponent's knee buckle, then a punch snaps his head back, followed by a gut thump, causing the fighter to double over.

The hot chicks in DOA3 are absolutely stunning, but meaner than hell

When you see the combatants in motion as they're slammed into forest trees, kicked out of buildings and pulverised on wet streets, you'll get an idea of the blinding computing brute force of Xbox. What's more, beat 'em up gameplay has never felt as instinctive and fluid. DOA3 is fast hotting up to become a blindingly bright superstar.

Like a deadly siren, DOA3 will romance you with gorgeous graphics then knock you out with its awesome gameplay.

JET SET RADIO FUTURE OUT: TBC

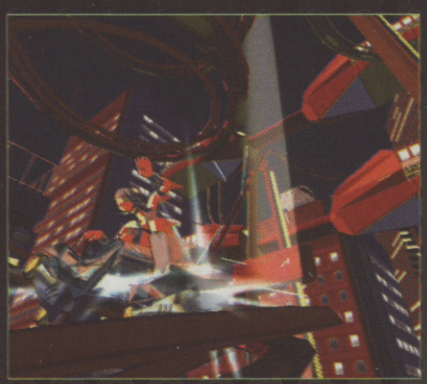


As you burn around you can do loads of new tricks and skate backwards too

Tokyo is alive. Carving through the cel-shaded metropolis, literally hundreds of colourful characters litter the streets and dive out of the way as you tear along the pavement and jump onto railings. If you thought JSR on DC was fantastic, wait till you see what the Future holds.

Loads more skaters (at least 25 to unlock), insanely large environments that stretch much further and higher than before, mouth-watering visuals and special effects, slick animation, more tricks, and up to four people can compete in the new multiplayer mode. It's still only 40 per cent complete, but fans of the original, and any gamer worth his salt, should be trembling with joy.

You can now switch 180 degrees to skate backwards, pull off tons of twisty tricks as you carve along edges, and nail loads more airborne stunts. Also, collect ten cans, press the boost button and you blister along leaving a trail of fire, creating an amazing special effect that looks like you're standing behind the engine of a fighter jet. And the controls have been brilliantly refined, making it much easier to negotiate levels and link your tricks. JSR was cool, but JSRF reaches sub-arctic levels of über-cool. This one of the finest titles headed for Microsoft's powerhouse console.



All the levels are packed with amazing detail, making the DC game look tame

Cutting up the curbs and rooftops feels awesome. Much busier and more manic than before, JSRF will blow you away.

HALO OUT: MARCH 14

Monumental single-player and team-based gun blazing action. Tearing aliens apart rarely feels this exhilarating.

Team up or go it alone. In the single-player game you'll have to do both

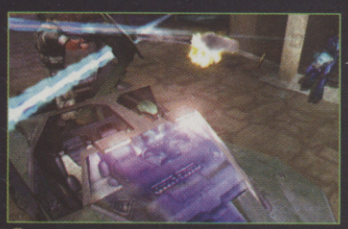
Playing Halo feels like you've been thrown into one of the awesome battles in Starship Troopers: hoards of aliens, huge weapons, and no escape.

You're a cyborg, created to fight man's sworn enemy, the Covenant. A mysterious story-based game, Halo has you tactically shooting your way through 10 immense alien-filled levels. The producer of Halo, Rick Ryan, told us that "a single mission can take up to six hours to play through". But what'll really blow you away is the intense first-person combat.

It's dark, you're in a rocky wilderness and the only light comes from the torch on your gun and those of the marines flanking you. Friendly yellow dots show on your radar, but suddenly a plague of hostile red dots appears, yet you see nothing. Then, a gang of aliens emerges. You move behind a rock and watch as gunfire ricochets off it, creating sparks. A few marines open fire and engage the enemy in a fight, so you can join in the frenzy.

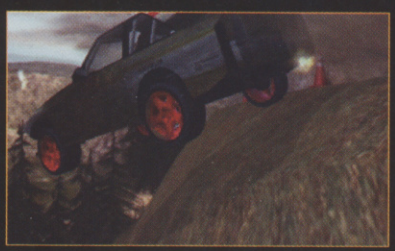
Being involved in the hundreds of mini-battles that pop up throughout Halo is awesomely intense and should have shooter freaks weak at the knees. Also, there's immense multiplayer potential: up to four players on one console with loads of game options; two-player split-screen co-operative through the story mission levels; and 16 players can play when four Xbox machines are linked together. So get ready for one of the best-looking first-person combat adventures ever.

Choose to drive or shoot



Jaw-dropping visuals. Check it out

RALLISPORT CHALLENGE OUT: TBC

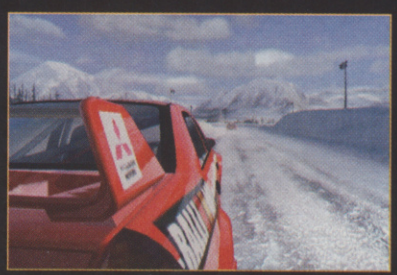


Make a serious mistake and roll off a cliff

Screeching onto the rally scene, RSC brings with it breakneck rough road fury that's set to make the Colin McRaes, V-Rallies, WRCs, and Sega Rallies of this world sit up and take notice.

Although in early development, RSC still manages to wow with its sheer speed and sophisticated graphical detail. Bumpy tracks, trees, and other surrounding objects feel fantastic. You can drive through bushes, squashing them down; clip trees so leaves fall to the ground; hit boulders that make you flip, and severely damage your car, hindering performance.

There are over 25 licenced cars (plus non-rally cars such as the Skyline and Beetle), loads of race modes, such as Hill Climb, and a four-player split-screen option. With all these cool features, RSC should definitely be able to stand up to any upcoming next-gen rally competitors.



The car physics are right on the money

Bombing along and churning up dirt in RSC is a super smooth rally experience.

ODDWORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSEE OUT: MARCH 14

It's weird tag team adventure action all the way with Munch and Abe. The developers have used all the Xbox's horsepower available to come up with a massive game (a whopping 5Gb), and it really shows when you're storming around the mammoth and intricate 3D environments, and encountering oddball races such as the sweet-looking but savage little Fuzzles.

Munch's Oddysee is far more than your average adventure story, with its fast-paced battle action, team problem solving, RTS strategy, and kooky humour. But what really stands out is the brilliantly natural and organic feel to the gameplay and the methods of powering-up. If you need to get somewhere sharpish, you use a nearby espresso vending machine to boost you speed. Or use Munch's psychic abilities to nick a vehicle and burn it to your location in no time. It's in-game flexibility and originality like this that makes Munch's gameplay so charming and addictive.

Adventures don't come much crazier or bigger than Munch's Oddysee. Prepare for a brilliantly brain-bending experience.

CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED

Air Force Delta Storm, Apprentice Knight, Arctic Thunder, Batman Vengeance, Battlefield: 1942, Black & White: Next Generation, BC, Blood Omen 2, Bounty Hunter, Breed, Bruce Lee, Championship Manager, Circus Maximus, Comanche, Commandos 2, Conflict Desert Storm, Crash, Crazy Car Championship, Crazy Taxi Next, Crimson Sea, Curse: The Eye Of Isis, Dark Summit, Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2, David Beckham Soccer, Deadly Skies, Dead To Rights, Defender, Desert Storm, Dino Crisis 3, Double-S.T.E.A.L, Dr Muto, Dragon's Lair 3D, DroneZ, Duality, Duke Nukem Forever,

CEL DAMAGE | OUT: MARCH 14

Car combat in a Jet Set graphical stylee, Cel Damage's visuals are beautiful and the animation is fantastically smooth. There are tons of off-the-wall weapons, mad scenarios, deformable landscapes, and shed-loads of game modes. Cutely chaotic, Cel Damage's light-hearted approach to the genre of car combat is really refreshing.

The action hots up as a group of you charge one another and let rip

MAX PAYNE | OUT: TBC

Identical to the PC version in every way, playing Max Payne without a keyboard and mouse on Xbox still manages to feel amazingly responsive. The controls are perfectly intuitive, the action is brilliantly cinematic, and as you'd expect, the visuals rock.

Max gets personal in the only way he knows how. With a big fat gun. Blat!

WRECKLESS OUT: TBC

Playing Wreckless feels like being a wrecking ball on wheels. Perfect if you like trashing stuff and driving fast.

Bouncing dune buggies on the streets of Hong Kong. What more do you want?

Chassis-crushing crashes *a la* Burnout should satisfy any joyriders out there

A gang of Triads smash through the busy streets of Hong Kong in blacked-out shiny saloon cars. You're first mission: to take them out.

This training level sees you unavoidably annihilating the downtown area as you weave through packed narrow streets in pursuit of the bad guys. The concept may be a simple one, but the level of ridiculous chaos and carnage is outrageous and feels crazily intense. But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Throughout the game you get behind the wheel of massive armoured vehicles, monster trucks, tiny cars that make the Smart Car look like a bus, and dune buggies. Sick.

There are 20 missions to blaze through and two distinctive storylines to choose from – to be a part of a specialist elite task force employed to obliterate the Hong Kong mafia, or to become a government agent assigned with the mission to investigate and uncover links between the mafia and the police. With amazing real-time damage modelling, and deliciously rich visuals, Wreckless is geared up to impress.

In need of speed? Try this espresso vending machine

If you think Pikmin looks weird, wait till you see this

Munch uses the power of his mind. Buzz-ack!

PROJECT EGO OUT: TBC

Stubble and tattoos. Very manly

Peter Molyneux is a legendary UK games developer and true to form his latest project, a third-person 3D adventure, is taking evolution-based gameplay to new a level.

Your life story evolves as a result of the choices you make and the potential in this alternate universe is endless, with amazing detail filling the game. Display strength and your muscles will visually expand; receive cuts in battle and the scars will stay with you; even tan your skin with exposure to sunlight. Such immense levels of freedom and evolution have yet to be seen on a console, so who better than Mr Molyneux to give it to us?

Evolving and growing into a big bad mofo in Project Ego is looking like serious fun.

The environments are filled with detail

'Anyone put the sundial back an hour?'

ED | R XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX:

E.T., F1 2001, 4x4 Evolution 2, Fantastic Four, Fate, Fellowship Of The Ring, Freaky Flyers, Gaia Blade, Galleon, Ghost Recon, Giants X, GTA3, Gravity Games Bike, Groove Runner, Gun Metal, Heaven And Hell, House Of The Dead 3, Hunter: The Reckoning, Internal Pain, Iron Man, Jackie Chan Adventures, Jet Sprint MX, Jikkyou World Soccer 2001, Jonny Drama, Judge Dredd, Jurassic Park 3, Kabuki Warriors, La Femme Nikita, Largo Winch, Loose Cannon, Mad Dash, Madden NFL 2002, Malice, Mad Dash Racing, Master Rally, MChase, Medal Of Honor: Allied Assault, Microsoft Hockey

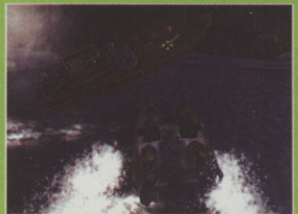
NIGHTCASTER | OUT: MARCH 14

A spell-casting action adventure, Nightcaster sees you play a young lad who has been chosen to overthrow the powers of Darkness. You'll trek through enormous environments, and your character evolves as you battle through truckloads of enemies along the way.

Not the most amazing graphics seen on Xbox, but the gameplay's where it's at

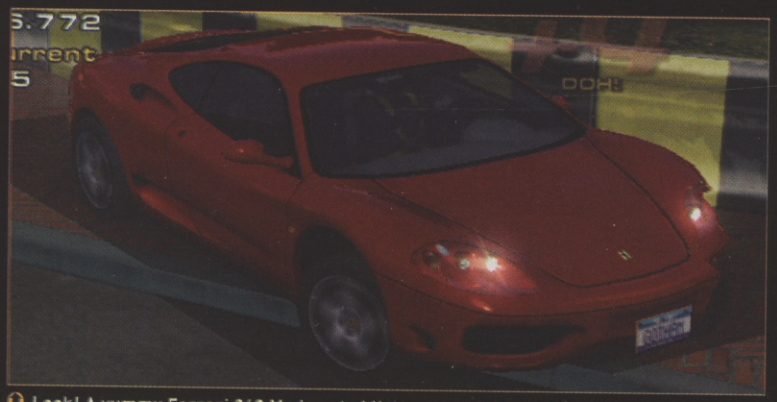
BLOOD WAKE | OUT: TBC

Boat-on-boat action is the name of the game. Not poncey sailing boats, though – these are gunboats with torpedoes, rockets, mines and other high-powered weaponry. Over 25 high-octane single-player story-based missions and a loony multiplayer option combine for some seriously madcap explosive action.



You unleash some sea rage on a powerboat that cuts you up

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING OUT: MARCH 14



Look! A yummy Ferrari 360 Modena to blister around the city streets in. Va-Vroom!

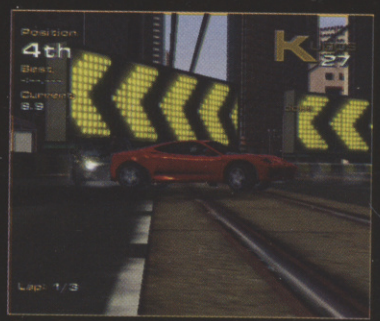
Please try not to explode all over the mag as you leer at these juicy new screens of PGR. Building on the foundations of MSR, Bizarre Creations has fine-tuned the rock-hard DC racing masterpiece, and tailored the Xbox experience for gamers of every skill level. The results are amazing.

As you zip along in the new Mini around Times Square, you lose control and slam into a barrier. Your wing mirror snaps back, the side panelling crumples and one of the headlights smashes, reducing visibility.

Cracking visuals and gameplay tighter than a duck's arse, makes PGR a strong contender for best driving game on Xbox.

All the things that you wanted in MSR have been thrown into PGR: an easily mastered control system, even better handling, new tracks and locations, more game modes and better multiplayer options, plus a gorgeous visual overhaul. The game modes are split into Quick Race, Arcade Race, Kudos Challenge, Time Attack, Medal Pursuit and Multiplayer. So, more variety and the kind of 'pick up and put down' playability that didn't exist in MSR. Plus, where the DC predecessor focussed on lower spec cars, you can now unlock super high-spec power cars such as Ferrari F50s. PGR feels faster, more responsive, and looks much sweeter than MSR. Get ready for the ultimate street racing experience.

The cars can now leap through the air



PGR looks slicker than any other racer

AZURIK-RISE OF PERATHI

'I'm blue, la-da-de-la-do-da!'

You're Azurik, a young blue dude sworn to protect the elements of fire, water, earth and air, and faced with stopping an apocalyptic prophecy, which is already in full swing. Hey, we'll give it a shot.

This 3D action adventure places you in a gigantic, seamless 3D world – no more pesky loading times – battling bundles of crazy creatures who'll come at you in flocks, on their own, riding other enemies and in seemingly endless combinations. Xbox is pulling out all the stops with its action adventure games, and Azurik's totally engaging battle-based action is definitely one to look out for.

The hero may be ice-blue, but the action is shaping up to be red hot. Fantasy adventure fans are in for a real treat.

AMPED OUT: MARCH 14

You're riding down the expansive mountains, cutting through trees off-piste, carving up clouds of snow, riding rails and pulling tricks. All the while, you're looking for roaming cameramen so you can impress them with your skills in a bid to get yourself in magazines and in videos so you become a global snowboarding superstar.

Amped is a freestyle-based extreme title that lets you explore the slopes with more freedom than has ever appeared in any snowboarding game to date. There are tons of unlockable courses – and fantasy venues – secret routes, and tricks to master. And blessed with visuals that'll make your eyes melt – yet another exclusive Xbox title to put on your wish list.

Snow's never looked this real

A free-roaming, freesty

CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRME

Mike Tyson Boxing, Minority Report, Morrowind World, Mortal Kombat, Moto GP, Murakumo, Mutant Chronicles, MX2002, NASCAR Heat, NASCAR Thunder 2002, NBA 2K2, NBA Live 2002, New Legends, Nezmix, NFL Blitz 2002, NFL Fever 2002, NHL 2002, NHL Hitz 2002, Outlaw Golf, Ozzy's Black Skies, Panzer Dragoon, Phantasy Star Online, Pirates Of Skull Cove, Project K-X, Pro Race Driver, Rally Trophy, Rayman M, Republic, Ridge Racer Xbox, Robin Hood, Rocky, Sacrifice, Sam And Max, Sega GT2, Sgt. Cruise, Shrek, Silent Hill 2: Restless Dreams, SK8, Shenmue 2, Soul Calibur 2, Spyro,

ENCLAVE | OUT: TBC

Medieval maniacs, start licking your lips. There are more gorgeously textured levels than you can shake a wizard's stick at, ranging from snow-covered mountain cities to molten-filled lava caverns. The single-player adventure looks strong at the moment, and the co-operative and competitive multiplayer games are shaping up nicely.

Enclave is blessed with brilliant graphics and cool medieval characters

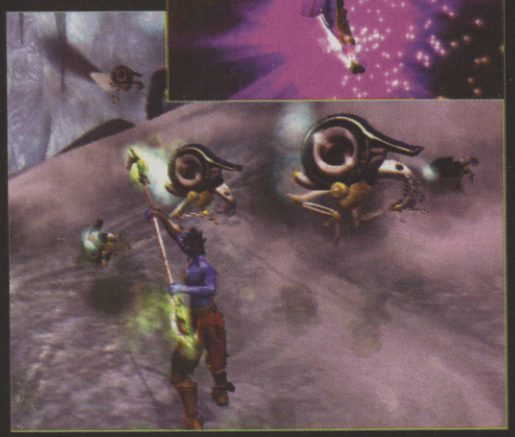
GENMA ONIMUSHA | OUT: MAY 2002

A few changes have been made with Onimusha's shift onto Xbox. Now the enemies can power-up on green souls, there are three types of new enemy, and the whole game has been made much harder – due to complaints about how easy it was to finish the PS2 version.

Get in a tug-o-war with the enemy in a battle for green orbs. If they win, run.

OUT: MARCH 14

There are some fantastic visual effects



Azurik uses his pole to take out these snail-like things

BRUTE FORCE OUT: TBC

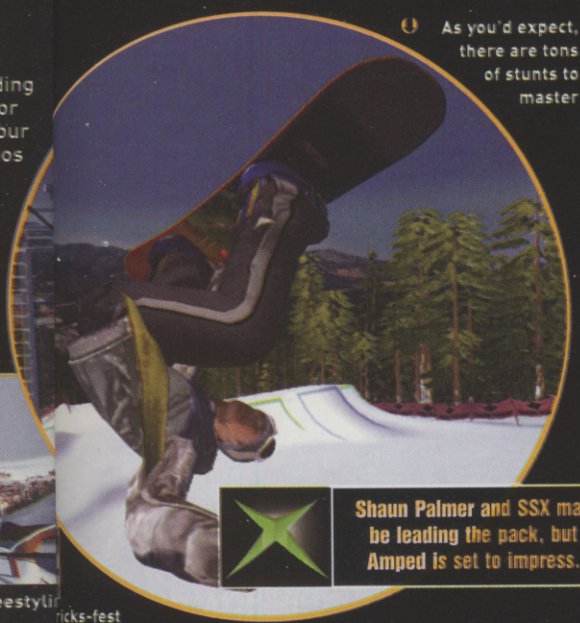
Squad-based tactical shooter Brute Force puts you in command of a team of mercenaries. In the vein of Project Eden on PS2, the action has you switching between and controlling all four of the characters in your team, but unlike Eden you can send out orders and deploy your commandos on the move.

There are four worlds to stealth and tactically work through, and the computing power of Xbox means that the characters appear in CG quality. They also become more specialised and powerful as you progress, like in an RPG.

There's a cast of nutty and astounding-looking creatures

Beautiful babes carrying deadly weapons. Mmm

Definitely better out than in



As you'd expect, there are tons of stunts to master

Shaun Palmer and SSX may be leading the pack, but Amped is set to impress.

ricks-fest

FUZION FRENZY OUT: MARCH 14

Leap around arenas and kick ass

This might be pitching itself as a party game, but the action is fast-paced and continuous for all involved – no dice rolling and definitely no sitting around waiting for your turn.

See, this is urban arena-based battle action set in a futuristic cyber world with more than 45 mini-games – like racing around in giant spheres. It's not rocket science, but playing it is a riot.

GUNVALKYRIE OUT: TBC

Robotic, weapon-packed suits that let you fly around like a mobile army, are definitely the way forward.

You're a member of Gunvalkyrie, a government-funded organisation. A distress call has been sent from an insect-dominated planet called Tilnag, so it's your job to 'investigate'. In other words, go there and blow the hell out of anything that moves. This is an all-out shooting extravaganza.

Heavy metal and action rule the day

OR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX: CONFIRMED FOR XBOX:

SSX Tricky, Star Wars Starfighter, Strident, Superman, SWAT, Test Drive, Test Drive Off-Road, Tetris Worlds, The Matrix, The Simpsons Road Rage, The Thing, Thunderstrike Operation Phoenix, Title Defense, TOCA Race Driver, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2x, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, Tour De France, TransWorld Skateboarding, TransWorld Snowboarding, TransWorld Surf, U.S.S. Antarctica, UFC: Tapout, Ultimate Blade of Darkness, Unreal Championship, V.I.P., Wiggles, Wrath, WWF Raw is War, Xavier Fox, Yager

STAR WARS OBI-WAN | OUT: TBC

Using the left analogue to manoeuvre the Jedi Knight and the right stick to control your light saber, you leap around as the young Obi-Wan through 15 levels, duking it out with familiar baddies such as Darth Maul. But considering most Star Wars games suck, CVG is reserving opinion until we've played a fuller version of the game.

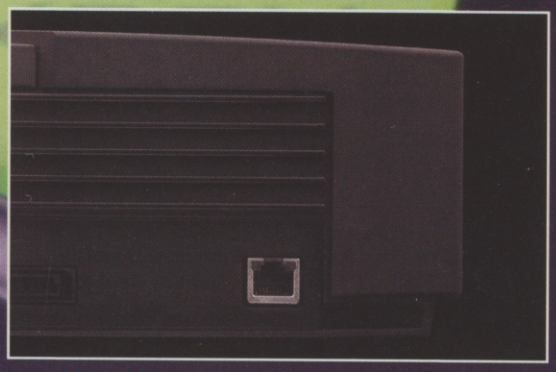
Obi-Wan shows off his moves, but this battle droid isn't easily impressed

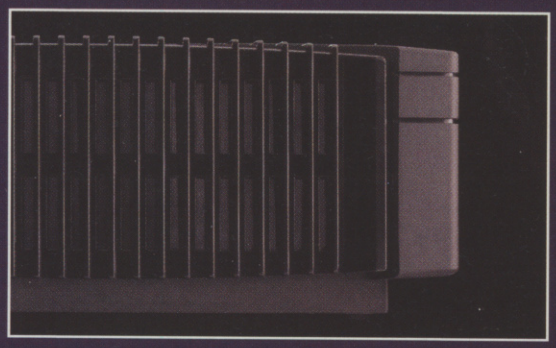
BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER | OUT: TBC

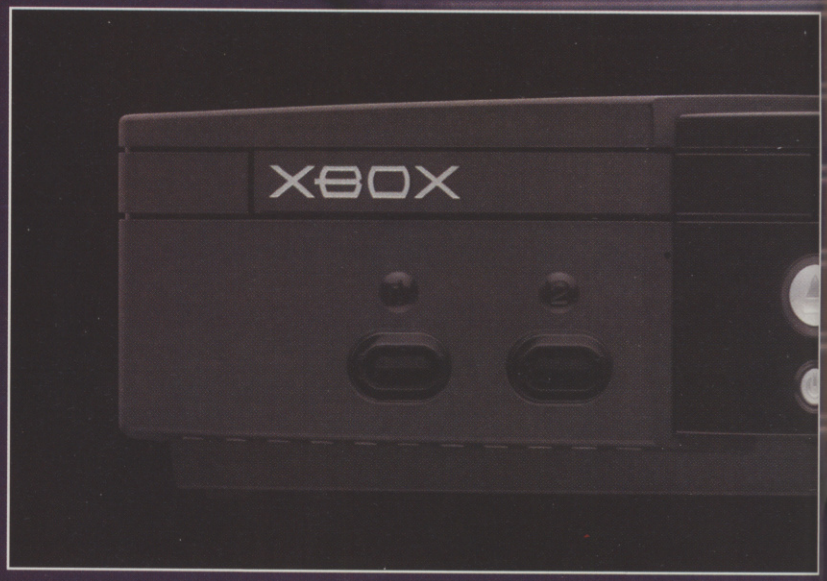
You control the stake-wielding, high-kicking Buffy. You've got a huge catalogue of vampire whuppin' moves at your disposal, so this feels like a 3D action adventure mixed with a top-notch beat 'em up.

Buffy's gets her groovy threads dirty as she takes on this crusty undead monster

XBOX PERIENCE







You've seen the games. Now be first to play them

Luck. You've either got it, or you haven't. Today, you've got it. In fact, you've got so much luck shamrocks are seeping out your nipples and you're crapping black cats. Yup, you could say today is indeed your lucky day.

While the rest of the UK is sitting around reading magazines about Xbox and squinting at screenshots, trying to work out what the hell is going on in games like Halo, Amped and Project Gotham Racing, you could actually be playing them – months before Xbox even launches in the UK. In fact, just a few days after this issue of CVG goes on sale, when a very special event will be taking place.

CVG has teamed up with Microsoft to give 20 lucky readers exclusive access to the Xbox Xperience in London for one afternoon. We're talking hours of hands-on play – just you, a mate and some of Xbox's hottest titles. We'll even throw some free drinks down your over-excited, sweaty necks so you don't get distracted by such minor considerations as death by dehydration.

All we ask is, at the end of the afternoon, you tell us what you think of it. We may even put what you say (not to mention a snapshot of your odious boatrace) into the next issue. So, the only questions is, do you feel lucky, punk?

Answer the following question on an email to the usual address by midday, Monday 26th November:

What type of game is Halo?

1/ Role-player
2/ Real-time strategy
3/ First-person shooter
4/ I'm a potato

RULES AND REGULATIONS

1/ The event will take place in central London at Nutopia, 42 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, WC2 on Tuesday, 27th November from 2-5pm. If you can't come then you're out of luck.
2/ 20 winners will be drawn out of a hat and can each invite one mate to the event. You'll be contacted if you have won, so don't go hassling us, dudes.
3/ Winners must pay for their own travel arrangements.
4/ Some games may be 15-certificate, so please bring proof of age/ID on the day.
5/ Microsoft reserve the right to decide which games are available for play on the day.
6/ Entries must be emailed to our usual address, marked 'Xbox Xperience Competition' and can only be accepted up until midday, Monday 26th November. So to be sure your entry arrives in time, best pull your fingers out NOW, soldier.
7/ Please state your age and home address on your email entry.

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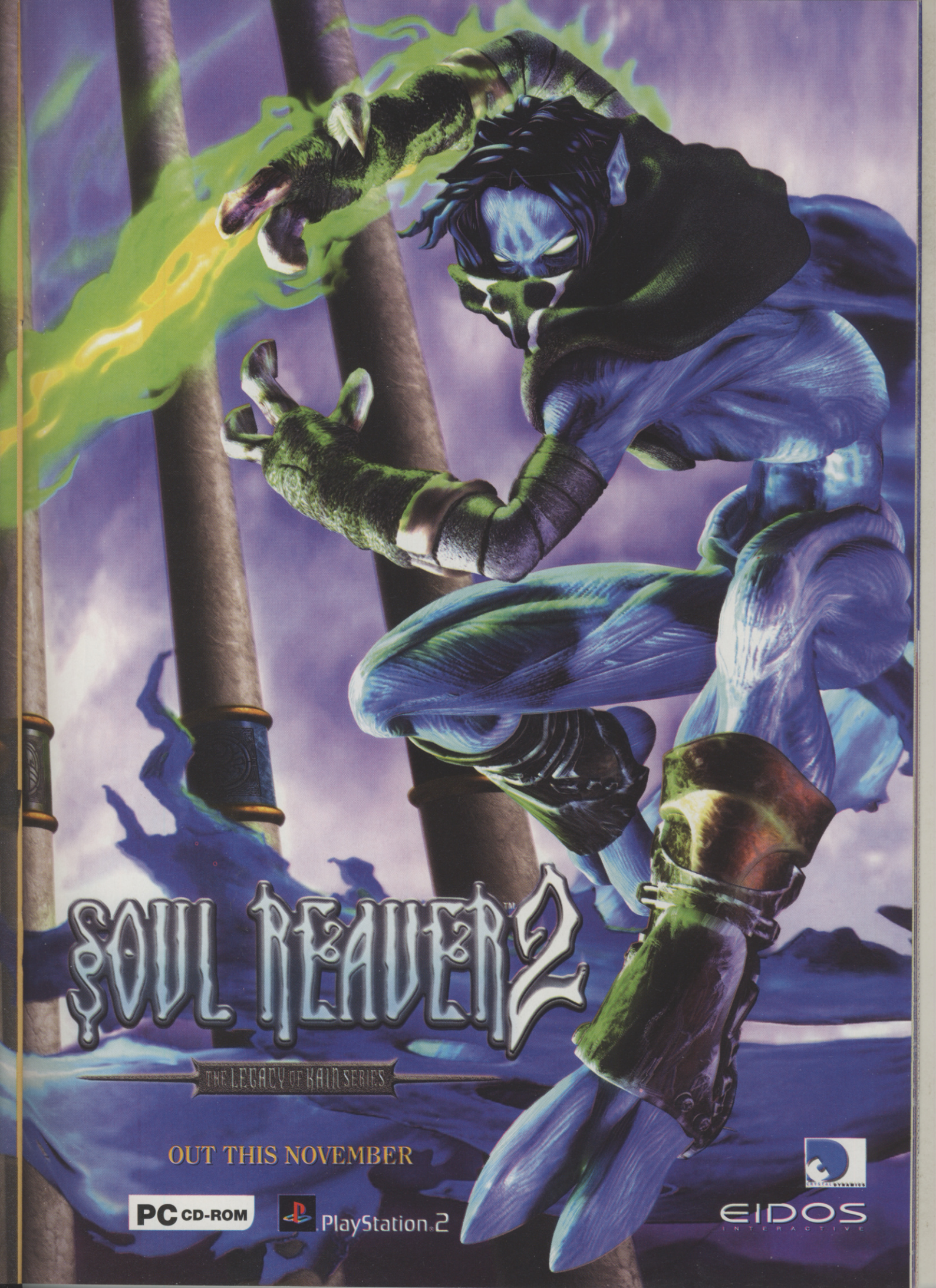

SOUL REAVER 2
THE LEGACY OF KAIN SERIES
OUT THIS NOVEMBER
PC CD-ROM
PlayStation 2
EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

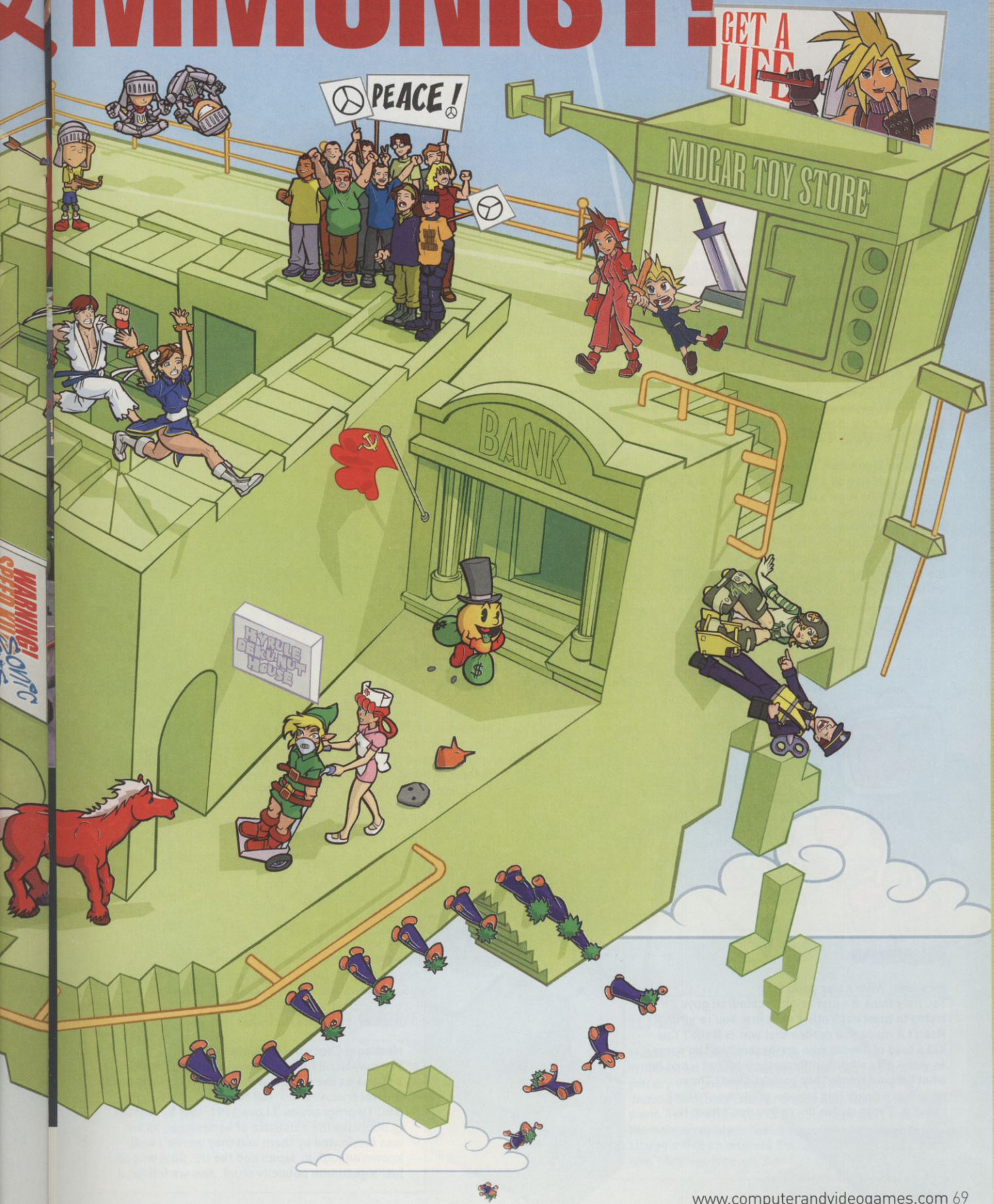
MARIO'S A C

That's what some think, anyway. Why? Because videogames are full of hidden messages that mess with your mind and twist how you think. The evidence is right in front of your eyes...

Secrets. You love them. Unlocking the crazy stuff you missed first time around is the reason you play games again after finishing them. Whether it's zapping yourself into a frog in Ghosts 'n' Goblins, grabbing the stealth suit in Metal Gear Solid or getting the devil car in Ridge Racer, hidden stuff is everywhere. But what about the other things you don't notice first time round? The hidden subtexts and meanings you're not meant to see. The subliminal stuff that creeps into your brain without you realising. Join us as we delve deep into the unknown and uncover why you're a bomb-hating communist with a ferocious appetite for consumer goods. Possibly.

WORDS: Dean Scott ILLUSTRATION: www.team-artonomy.com

MMUNIST!



ULTIMA ONLINE

Message: Be a better person.
"Karma, man. What goes around, comes around". Ultima players are gobbling up hippy crap without knowing it. UO's environment dynamics mean how you act can affect how the game plays – kill too many fluffy bunnies and a starving dragon may have to eat you instead. Teaching you to be more respectful? It's brainwashing kids, don't accept it.

NEW ZEALAND STORY

Message: Praise the Lord!
The day Jehovah's Witnesses come banging on Ryo's door in Shenmue is the day we all switch off. But gameland isn't safe from religious evangelism. Kill little Tiki the Kiwi in New Zealand Story in a certain way, and he ascends to heaven where The Virgin Mary receives him. Impressionable gamers bludgeoned into believing in the Christian afterlife? Resistance is futile.

SUPER MARIO BROTHERS

Message: Think Red, make love.
Some see Mario as a communist. Why? In Super Mario Bros he wears lots of red, looks like Stalin, tries to bring down King Koopa's oppressive Monarchy and hoists Soviet-style red star flags along the way. But he's also one for the ladies. In mythology, rescuing a princess is symbolic of losing your virginity. Looks like the plumber's getting his own pipe fixed up as well. Peachy.

JET SET RADIO

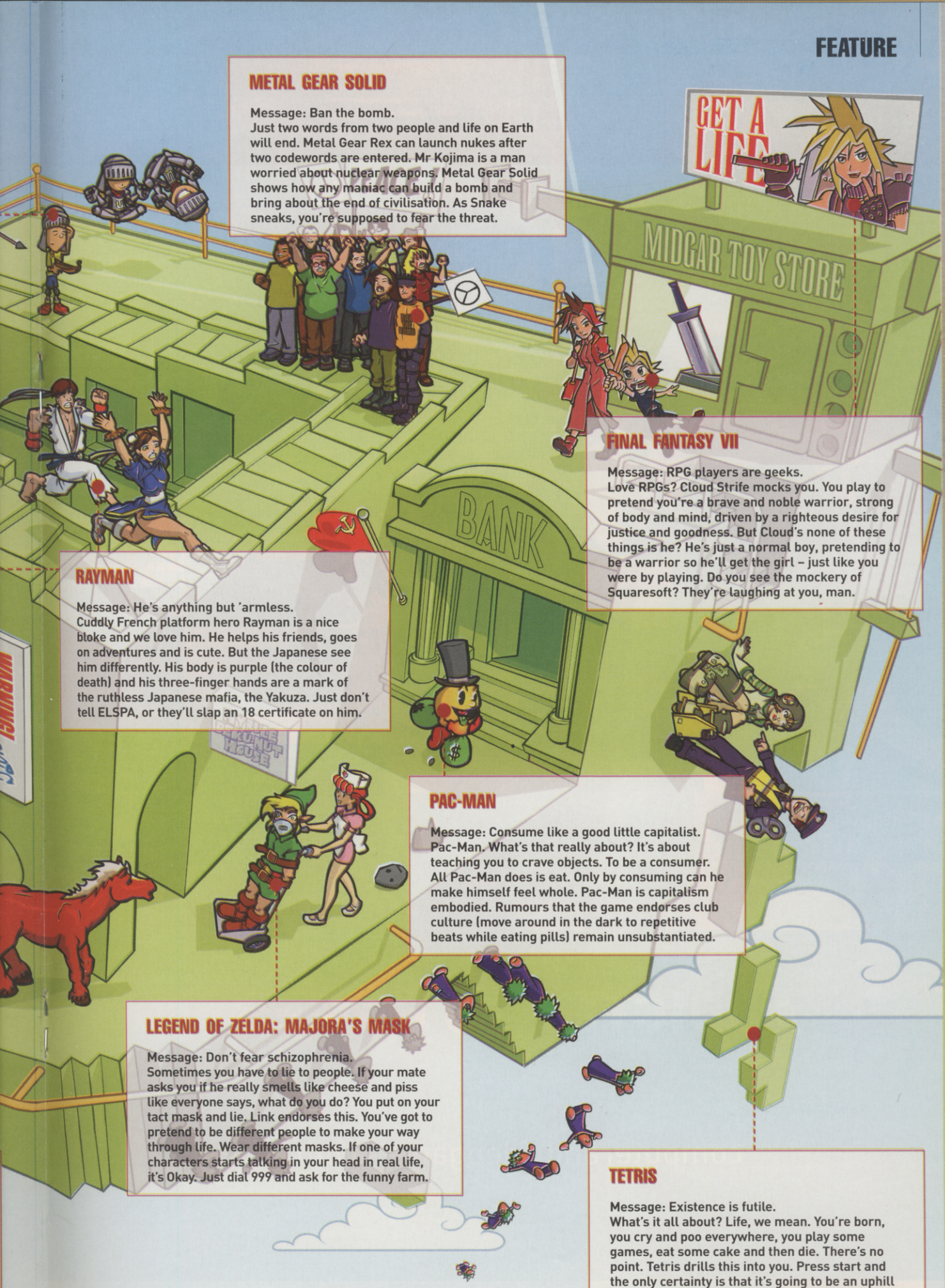
Message: Don't let The Man oppress you.
The system sucks! All they want to do is oppress creative young people. Art is an expression of individual human consciousness and The Man can't have that. Wipe your mind clean and get back into the machine, cog. Come on, love Jet Set Radio. Fight oppression. Does this mean you can come and draw all over our offices in pen? No.

BOMBERMAN

Message: What's war good for?
You may think it's just brightly coloured guys trying to toast each other with fire. You're wrong. Hasn't it made you realise that war is futile? You kill a load of people who are essentially the same as you – only slightly differently coloured – and for what? A gold trophy. Are you satisfied? Those people are dead. Has anyone really won? Think about it. Those dudes die so you don't have to.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Message: Check out hedgehogs!
You may think turbo-charged Sonic was crafted by Sega as the perfect mascot to meet Mario head on. Not true. Creator Yuji Naka admitted on the BBC TV programme 'I Love 1991' that he wanted to publicise the existence of hedgehogs, as he was fascinated by them and they weren't well known enough in Japan and the US. So it was all just a goddamn publicity stunt. And we fell for it.



METAL GEAR SOLID

Message: Ban the bomb.
Just two words from two people and life on Earth will end. Metal Gear Rex can launch nukes after two codewords are entered. Mr Kojima is a man worried about nuclear weapons. Metal Gear Solid shows how any maniac can build a bomb and bring about the end of civilisation. As Snake sneaks, you're supposed to fear the threat.

FINAL FANTASY VII

Message: RPG players are geeks.
Love RPGs? Cloud Strife mocks you. You play to pretend you're a brave and noble warrior, strong of body and mind, driven by a righteous desire for justice and goodness. But Cloud's none of these things is he? He's just a normal boy, pretending to be a warrior so he'll get the girl – just like you were by playing. Do you see the mockery of Squaresoft? They're laughing at you, man.

RAYMAN

Message: He's anything but 'armless.
Cuddly French platform hero Rayman is a nice bloke and we love him. He helps his friends, goes on adventures and is cute. But the Japanese see him differently. His body is purple (the colour of death) and his three-finger hands are a mark of the ruthless Japanese mafia, the Yakuza. Just don't tell ELSPA, or they'll slap an 18 certificate on him.

PAC-MAN

Message: Consume like a good little capitalist.
Pac-Man. What's that really about? It's about teaching you to crave objects. To be a consumer. All Pac-Man does is eat. Only by consuming can he make himself feel whole. Pac-Man is capitalism embodied. Rumours that the game endorses club culture (move around in the dark to repetitive beats while eating pills) remain unsubstantiated.

LEGEND OF ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK

Message: Don't fear schizophrenia.
Sometimes you have to lie to people. If your mate asks you if he really smells like cheese and piss like everyone says, what do you do? You put on your tact mask and lie. Link endorses this. You've got to pretend to be different people to make your way through life. Wear different masks. If one of your characters starts talking in your head in real life, it's Okay. Just dial 999 and ask for the funny farm.

TETRIS

Message: Existence is futile.
What's it all about? Life, we mean. You're born, you cry and poo everywhere, you play some games, eat some cake and then die. There's no point. Tetris drills this into you. Press start and the only certainty is that it's going to be an uphill struggle like an endless Escher staircase, and you won't survive forever. Just like life, really.

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FREEPLAY

MAKE SOME NOISE!

Howdy partners! Welcome to your corner of the CVG ranch where you can pull on your chaps, crank up the Dolly and prance around on pink-ribboned ponies. Okay, maybe not, but that doesn't matter. Freeplay is your section of the mag and you can say what you want, challenge us at games, slag our reviews or blag some cheats. No-one will laugh at you. Except us and the entire world if you make a tit of yourself. You know it makes sense, so make some noise.

Do you want your 15 minutes of fame in CVG's Freeplay? Then get your high scores, challenges and opinions to us now! Write to: Freeplay, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF. Or email us at: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

YOUR SHOUT

Got something to say about games we've reviewed? Totally agree or violently disagree? Then feed us your spleen in 100 words or less. Include a score (out of ten), your details and maybe a picture of yourself. Or email us at mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

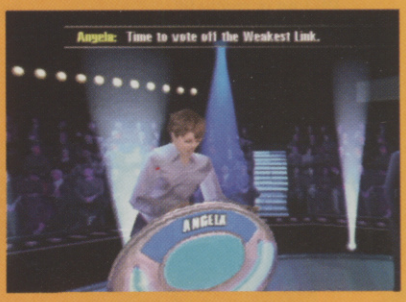
THE ITALIAN JOB
Format: PSone
Reviewed: Issue 239
Score: 8/10

WHAT WE SAID:
"Those who enjoyed the Driver games will love it. Could be PSone's last great racer."

YOU RECKON:
"Who wants to drive Minis when you can drive cooler cars in GT2? It's a rip off of Driver, with mediocre graphics, and the voice-over bloke gets on your tits. 6/10" **Mark Pierce, via email**

"I love the movie, so to play The Italian Job on PSone is fantastic. It looks stunning and the action is fast, smooth, and gripping. Definitely one of the best racing games I've played on PSone. 8/10" **Sam Smith, Manchester**

THE WEAKEST LINK
Format: PSone
Reviewed: Issue 239
Score: 4/10



WHAT WE SAID:
"This is the kind of game your parents will buy, and that should say it all."

YOU RECKON:
"Ban cash-ins on crap, mind-numbing TV game shows! They're an embarrassment to the games industry and The Weakest Link is utter rubbish. 2/10 " **Pete Duncan, Lowestoft**

"Are you mad? This is absolutely awesome. I played it with some mates last night and we had a brilliant time – it was tense and got us all stupidly competitive. It does look crap though. 8/10" **T. Scott, via email**

CHART ATTACK

CVG
What's turning us on

1	Metal Gear Solid 2 (PS2)
2	Pikmin (GC)
3	Mario Sunshine (GC)
4	Resident Evil (GC)
5	Medal Of Honour: AA (PC)
6	GTAIII (PS2)
7	Aliens Vs Predator 2 (PC)
8	Final Fantasy X (PS2)
9	Warioland 4 (GBA)
10	Tony Hawk's 3 (PS2)

READER
From Lewis Packwood, Watford

1	Crazy Taxi 2 (DC)
2	Skies Of Arcadia (DC)
3	Mario Kart: Super Circuit (GBA)
4	Perfect Dark (N64)
5	Freak Out (PS2)
6	Code: Veronica X (PS2)
7	Unreal Tournament (DC)
8	Soldier Of Fortune (PC)
9	Super Metroid (SNES)
10	Time Crisis (PSone)

BEST EVER...
Exclusive DC Games

1	Soul Calibur
2	Phantasy Star Online
3	Virtua Tennis
4	Metropolis Street Racer
5	Jet Set Radio
6	Shenmue
7	Sonic Adventure 2
8	Powerstone
9	Skies Of Arcadia
10	Grandia 2

BRAINS OF CVG
Lee Skittrell's Top 10 games ever

1	Pokemon (GB)
2	Final Fantasy IX (PSone)
3	Super Mario 64 (N64)
4	Tetris (GB)
5	Zelda: Majora's Mask (N64)
6	Metal Gear Solid (PSone)
7	Bubble Bobble (C64)
8	Grandia 2 (DC)
9	Illusion Of Time (SNES)
10	Shining Force (Mega Drive)

HUNTER'S MAILBAG

Got something to say? We'll let you shout it out to the world. Just put pen to paper and send your thoughts to: Hunter's Mailbag, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1P 5FF, or email: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

Cor blimey, you lot are a truly 'orrible bunch. Can't you write better than this crock of muck? I ain't read nuffink this awful since the electricity bill for me kennel arrived.

ONE FOR THE LADIES

My dad's buying me a PlayStation 2 or PC for Christmas and I can't decide. Everyone in my family says that a PS2 is rubbish and that I need to get a PC to do school work. So, can you tell me which one is better please.

Caitlin Tuck

PS Lee is really fit.

CVG: *You want to play games, right? You get a games machine. So ask for a PS2, and if you get any hassle from your family, you tell them that the PC has mainly adult, war and gory games like Half-Life and Return To Castle Wolfenstein, where as PS2 has 'suitable' games like Jak And Daxter. Hey presto! They'll be persuaded by their desire to 'protect' you. PS Yes, Lee goes jogging every day.*

TRICKY ONE

I have a question. In your review of The Italian Job, Lee says it could be PSone's last great racer. Does this mean that the machine will be dead soon?

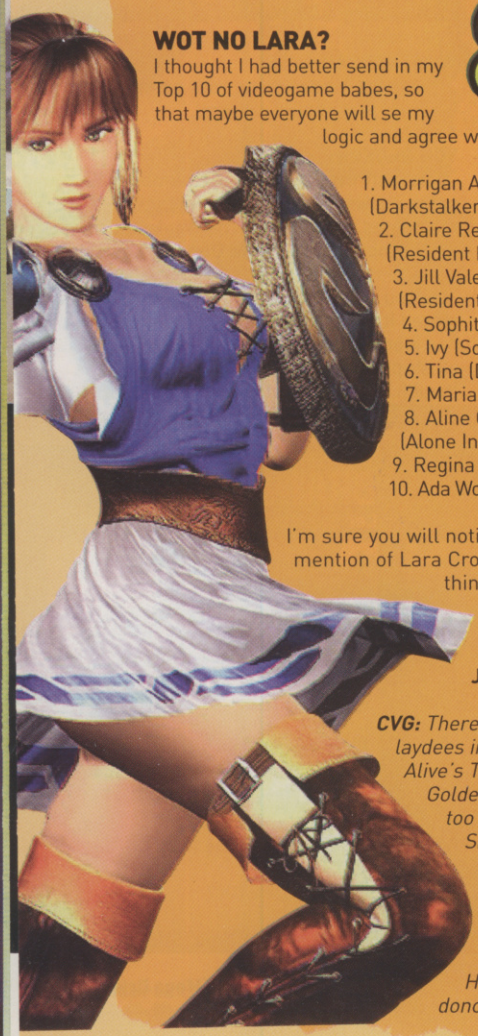
Marko

CVG: *Apparently – and we could be wrong here – there's a machine called the PS2. Sounds weird, we know, but probably all the 'great' racers will be on that from now on.*

GOLDEN BONES

WOT NO LARA?

I thought I had better send in my Top 10 of videogame babes, so that maybe everyone will se my logic and agree with me on this one.



1. Morrigan Aensland (Darkstalkers)
2. Claire Redfield (Resident Evil 2)
3. Jill Valentine (Resident Evil 3)
4. Sophitia (Soul Calibur)
5. Ivy (Soul Calibur)
6. Tina (Dead Or Alive 2)
7. Maria (Silent Hill 2)
8. Aline Cedrac (Alone In The Dark 4)
9. Regina (Dino Crisis)
10. Ada Wong (Resident Evil 2)

I'm sure you will notice that there is no mention of Lara Croft. This is because I think she looks like a sex-change man and the games are crap.

J M Clarice

CVG: *There sure are some fine laydees in there, J. Dead Or Alive's Tina definitely gets our Golden Bone, but we're not too sure about Maria from Silent Hill – she looks half-dead in most of the game! Still, Les was happy to see a girl in your top ten who doesn't have a pulse. He sees dead people, doncha know...*

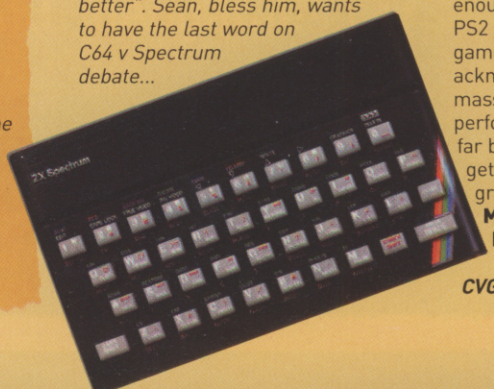
WHICH IS BETTER? THE C64 OR THE SPECTRUM?

May I express my best wishes for the fantastic publication Computer & Video Games (from me, and the rest of the Commodore Scene staff) which, despite all the odds, has reached its 20th year – well done.

No chance of an A5-sized commemorative reprint of the first-ever issue is there? Anyway, my favourite memories are that the C64 screenshots nearly always looked better than the Spectrum counterparts. What a cheaply made machine with shite graphics and sound the Spectrum was! Anyway, hope to see you still going strong in another 20 years time!

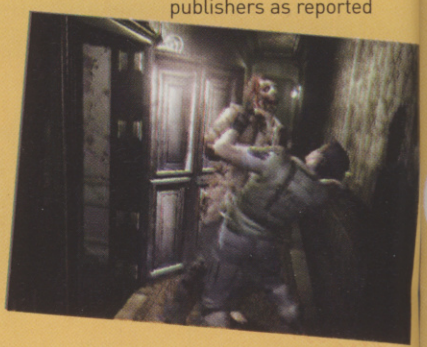
Shaun

CVG: *See, readers? Nothing changes. Even two decades ago, people were arguing over "which machine is better". Sean, bless him, wants to have the last word on C64 v Spectrum debate...*



BIG US UP, BROWN

Full marks for your latest issue, Li'l Bruvva is a great idea, keep it going! "Terrorists delay games" was of great interest, as we were truly gutted by the WTC attacks and are very pleased by the respect shown by these game publishers as reported



by you.Your Top 100 games ever was superb, and it was great to see such classics as Outrun from the old Atari days up there with WipEout and Ridge Racer! Your giant spread on GameCube's Resident Evil was enough to send a shiver down many a PS2 owner's back, not because of the game material but because of your acknowledgement of Chris Redfield's massive improvement in performance/graphics, this sounds far better than PS2 and we're not getting it! Cause for anxiety but a gripping read, your mag is brilliant!

Malcolm, Matthew and Laura Brown

CVG: *Brown family, we love you too!*

DRAWINZ WOT YOU DUN

Martin Topping decided to put pencil to paper and came up with this Pokemon extravaganza. His accompanying letter said, "Lee might be interested". So we showed the drawing to Lee, at which point he grabbed the picture from our hands, pulled down his pants and wiped his bottom with it. Luckily we scanned the picture in before Lee went crazy. The rest of us quite liked it though. So for your trouble Martin, have a limited edition CVG T-shirt.

I LOVE GT3!

All I ever read about is how PS2 is yet to deliver and Gran Turismo 3 is a waste of money. But when I turned up at my mate's house and asked for a go... WOW! I thought Gran Turismo 3 was awesome, and the speed of the PS2 kicks the doo-dah out of the old PlayStation – the water ripples, the trees...
Tom

CVG: *Anybody says that to us and we'll feed them to hungry piranha fish.*

I HATE GT3

Hi, doggydude. Just wanna tell you I got myself one of those PlayStation 2 thingies. I also have a Dreamcast, and I gotta tell ya, I am less than impressed with the PS2 performance. I ain't seen nothing my faithful DC can't do. I got GT3 and it's impressive, but not that impressive. The DVD feature's the only good thing about PS2 – and the fact that I can play my PSone retro collection again.
A not-too-impressed PS2 owner.
PS I'm gonna get me an Xbox and GameCube.

"Hello, is that Tony's Tropical Fish? Yeah, have you got any piranha fish in? You have? They've skipped lunch? Even better..."

SHAO LIN? SHAOS

I have been wondering about whether I'm likely to see a remake or sequel to (in my opinion) the stunning, groundbreaking game, Shao Lin from THQ. I know the

game didn't receive excellent reviews from the press and yes, it did fall a little short of what it promised, but it's the players that should get the last word on how good a game is. After all, we pay for them and have more time to invest in playing a game.

So I put it to you and any developers reading this. With the power of the PS2 and like consoles surely there must be someone out there who can see the potential to build on the shortcomings of the first instalment. This game could have the potential to blow the likes of DOA 3, Virtua Fighter 4 and even Tekken 4 off the face of the earth.
Wayne Hughes

CVG: *Wayne, we applaud anyone with such loyalty to a single game, but, dude, we had to cut your letter by HALF. Wayne, you are to games what Darius is to singing.*

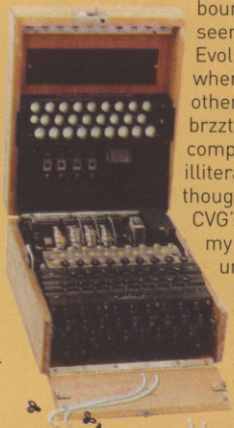
PUT THROUGH THE CVG TRANSLATE-A-TRON...

The Original

u saps havnt even got pro evolution soccer yet guess wot i have yeah on ps2 no not iss 2 im onna bout iss 3 yes original bought it for £200 yes the pal version and guess wot i also have metal gear solid 2 on ps2 which i got for £800 and iv got the original uncutt ha ha u lot will never see unless ???
Kam, UK

The Translate-A-Tron says...

Good morrow, chaps. You bounders don't seem to have Pro Evolution Soccer, whereas I, on the other hand [pzzt! brzzt! Cannot compute!] am an illiterate prat who thought I'd clog up CVG's post with my pathetic untrue ramblings. I will never read CVG again. I am too stupid.
Kam, UK



CVG: COULD DO BETTER

There's a difference between a 'glitch' and a 'bug'. Glitches are things which happen ALWAYS, at the same point (and time). Bugs are RANDOM. They could happen whenever a game is badly programmed.
Kazunori Goto

CVG: *10 Print "Glitches – always. Bugs – random"*
20 Goto 10

SHORT STUFF

You know what could have saved Ash in Evil Dead? Surf music. Man, surf music makes everything good.
Dark Wolf

Will there be any good action games coming out for the GameCube like Half-Life, Max Payne, or Unreal Tournament?
Daniel Cullen
CVG: *Those kind of games are more suited to the Xbox or PS2, but GameCube's Eternal Darkness might do.*

Your mag is the best designed mag in the world! All your designers should have pay rises!
J McComb and D Payne

CVG STINKER(S)

MEET MR HAIRY POOP...

I don't see why EVERYONE makes such a huge fuss over the Final Fantasy series. The graphics are out of this world and the FMV sequences are to die for, but the gameplay is boring, repetitive, frustrating and generally a heap of hairy old poop! Stop wasting valuable pages of your fantastic mag on a load of old crap!
Adam (the man) Smith

AND SAY HELLO TO MR PLOPPY PANTS

I love your mag and never miss an issue, but the pant-soiling one-liners are just getting too much! There was one on almost every second page! Please stop this madness!
Jack (needs fresh pants 'cos he played GBA Mario Kart) Pollard

CVG: *What would Sam Ryan of TV's Silent Witness say about these two, eh? Why, the canny Scots body-butcher would no doubt point out that both waffle on about poo and pants, both use too many exclamation marks and both have added words to their name for no apparent reason. She'd be right.*

HAVE YOUR SAY

While hanging out in games shops pretending to work, we've been asking gamers which PlayStation 2 game you are most looking forward to playing. Below are the results. No surprise Metal Gear 2 comes out on top.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2	65%
FINAL FANTASY X	18%
STUNTMAN	12%
TEKKEN 4	3%
ONIMUSHA WARLORDS 2	2%

BUG STOMPER

TELL US ABOUT THOSE GAMING GLITCHES

We've all seen them. Sometimes they are just amusing little glitches. Sometimes they are horrific balls-ups that ruin whole games. Bugs – no matter how hard they try, they can never quite get rid of them.

So to make sure fellow players know where to expect a code cockroach, let us know when you find one. We'll print the worst offenders and crush them with a big CVG hobnailed boot. Send any crime candidates you come across to mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk and we'll do the rest.

RED FACTION
Format: PS2

Start a new game, head down the tunnel, and run past the miner and guard till another guard starts shooting. Put the miner between you and the guard. He gets killed leaving the other guard to kill himself. Sent in by Ben Sharn, Essex.

GRAN TURISMO 3 A-SPEC
Format: PS2

In any race go into first-person mode and look in your rear-view mirror. When you drive over some lines or road markings they will not appear in the mirror. Very strange indeed. Sent in by Adam and Ben Holtby.

SMASH IT UP

"DIE, YOU USELESS PIECE OF CRUD!"

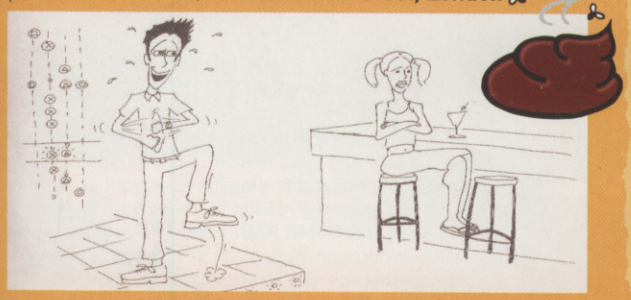
There's nothing more infuriating than splashing out on a spanking new gadget, only to get home and realize what you've purchased is an unholy piece of devil's doo doo. But it's so freakin' easy to get dazzled by modern-day fancy packaging and the colourful spells cast on us by marketing wizards that these mistakes happen all too often. But here's your chance to get your own back, in a public display of brutal mutilation.

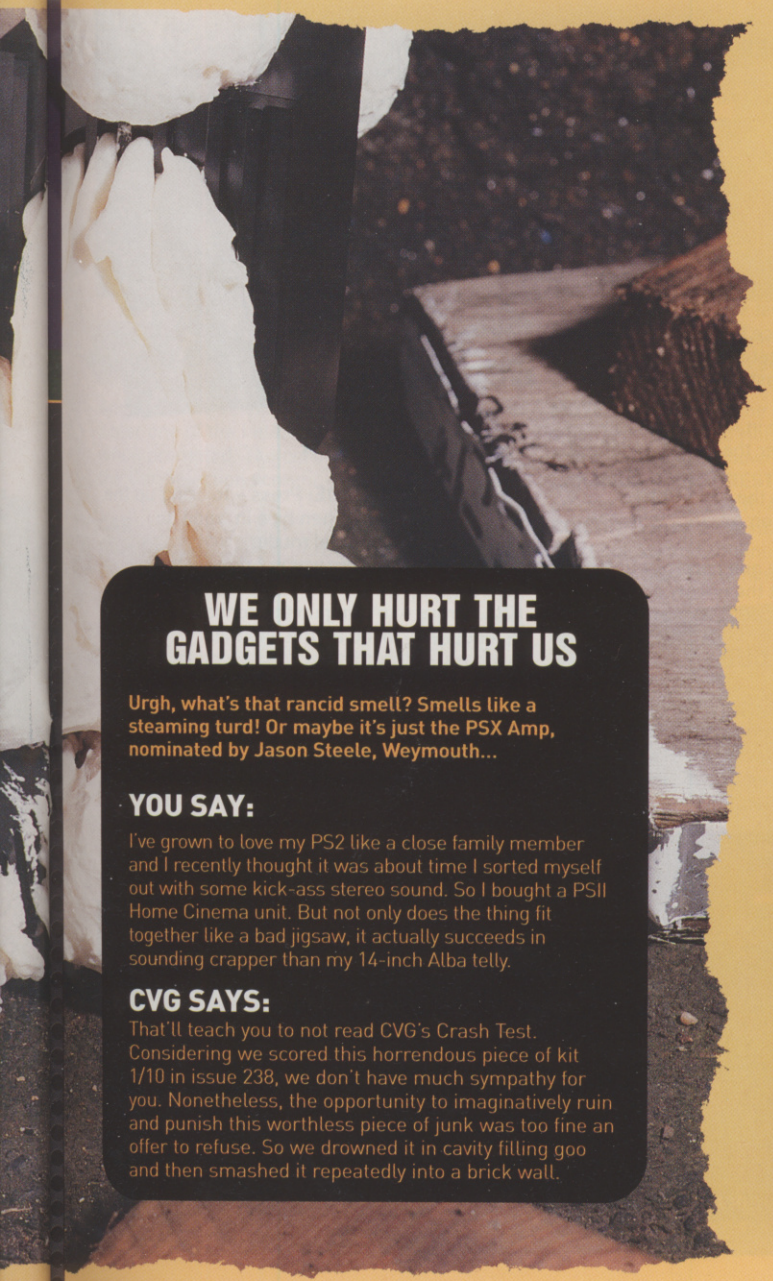
MELTING POT

SEND US YOUR GAME IDEAS

NIGHT CLUB FEVER

This rhythm action game sees you play Dirk, a women-repellent geek. But he's slapped on the aftershave and gone to his local club in search of chicks. On each level you've got to impress a succession of ever more attractive ladies, progressing from a seedy Essex nightclub (full of boilers), to the Ministry Of Sound (packed with beauties). Rumba! © **Tim Steel, London**





WE ONLY HURT THE GADGETS THAT HURT US

Urgh, what's that rancid smell? Smells like a steaming turd! Or maybe it's just the PSX Amp, nominated by Jason Steele, Weymouth...

YOU SAY:

I've grown to love my PS2 like a close family member and I recently thought it was about time I sorted myself out with some kick-ass stereo sound. So I bought a PSII Home Cinema unit. But not only does the thing fit together like a bad jigsaw, it actually succeeds in sounding crapper than my 14-inch Alba telly.

CVG SAYS:

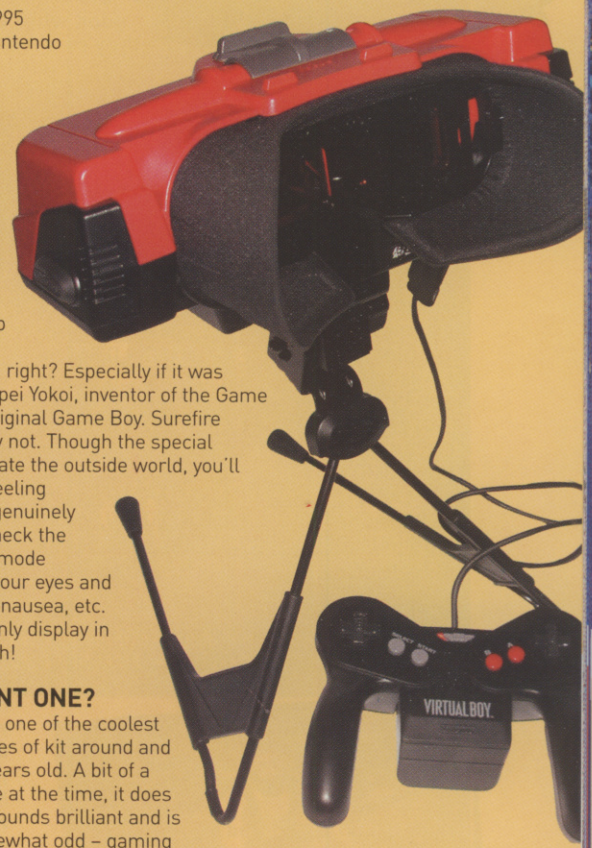
That'll teach you to not read CVG's Crash Test. Considering we scored this horrendous piece of kit 1/10 in issue 238, we don't have much sympathy for you. Nonetheless, the opportunity to imaginatively ruin and punish this worthless piece of junk was too fine an offer to refuse. So we drowned it in cavity filling goo and then smashed it repeatedly into a brick wall.

ACTION REPLAY

GROOVY GAMING GEAR OF YESTERYEAR

#5: VIRTUAL BOY

Year released: 1995
Manufacturer: Nintendo



WHAT IS IT?

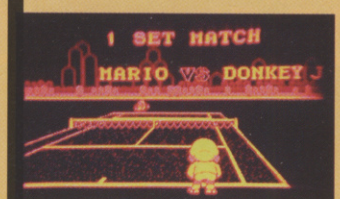
You'd imagine a new Nintendo machine with hi-res 3D graphics, a 32-bit processor, built-in 3D virtual display, digital stereo sound and a new double-grip controller to be a runaway success, right? Especially if it was designed by Gumpei Yokoi, inventor of the Game and Watch and original Game Boy. Surefire hit? Unfortunately not. Though the special eyeshades eliminate the outside world, you'll return to reality feeling slightly sick and genuinely disorientated – check the automatic pause mode designed to rest your eyes and avoid headaches, nausea, etc. Oh, and it could only display in black and red. Doh!

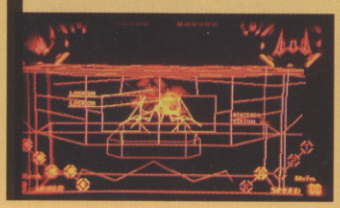
WHY DO I WANT ONE?

Well, it's got to be one of the coolest looking retro pieces of kit around and it's not even six years old. A bit of a cumbersome joke at the time, it does look really cool, sounds brilliant and is a unique – if somewhat odd – gaming experience on a stick!

LOOK OUT FOR...

Red Alarm is an excellent 3D shooter full of well thought-out enemies and stick men scampering around bases like a tiny version of StarFox. Golf is one of the few games that actually benefits from the unique 3D display, with a real sense of depth. But Wario Land is probably the best of the 20 or so games they released because you have to move around in 3D as part of the gameplay, attacking enemies only when you're on the same 3D level as them. Unfortunately a lot of the games could have worked just as well on a normal Game Boy, which is probably the main reason for its failure.





WHERE CAN I GET ONE?

You'll be able to snag a boxed US Virtual Boy on Ebay including a Mario Tennis game pack for around £50 with boxed games for around £10-15. Rare Japanese releases will cost more but will become big collectors' items in the future, so get in quick.

Alternatively, try the net – www.virtual-boy.net for info on American and Japanese Virtual Boy and http://dana.ucc.nau.edu/~dbt/VBMain.html for Virtual Boy PC and Linux emulators. And remember – children under seven must not use the Virtual Boy or else permanent eye damage can occur. Yoinks!

THE DOGHOUSE

BEWARE: CHEATS WITH TEETH!

Our fluffy mutt has a nose for cheats. In fact, other than peeing on trees, nothing beats a good whiff of foul play. Grrr. If you sniff out any decent cheats, send them in. Just make sure they're good ones, 'cos Hunter goes for the nuts.

DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX 2

Enter the following codes at the main menu.

MOVIES	CODE
DAVE MIRRA	L,L,U,R,U,L,U,U,Square
RYAN NYQUIST	L,L,D,R,D,R,U,D,Square
TIM MIRRA	L,L,R,U,D,L,D,U,Square
KENAN HARKIN	L,L,L,L,R,R,D,D,Square
JOEY GARCIA	L,L,U,U,D,R,D,Saure
RICK MOLITERNO	L,L,U,D,R,L,L,U,Square
TODD LYONS	L,L,D,U,U,R,L,D,Square
JOHN ENGLEBERT	L,L,R,R,D,D,R,U,Square
SCOTT WIRCH	L,L,R,U,U,U,L,R,Square
TROY MCMURRAY	L,L,L,D,U,R,U,L,Square
MIKE LAIRD	L,L,R,U,U,R,U,R,Square
COLIN MACKAY	L,L,R,R,D,D,R,U,Square
LEIGH RAMSDELL	L,L,D,D,L,R,D,L,Square
ZACK SHAW	L,L,R,L,D,R,D,Square

SECRET RIDERS	CODE
MIKE DIAS	U,L,D,R,R,L,U,D,U,R,Square
AMISH GUY	U,L,D,R,R,L,L,D,U,L,Square

HALF-LIFE: BLUE SHIFT

Run the game with the -console command on the end of the executable file. Then during the game press ~ and type sv_cheats 1. Now enter 'god' for God mode, 'noclip' for No clip mode or 'impulse 101' to get all the weapons.

OUTTRIGGER

TESTING: To get new Sound and Movie test, beat all the missions on all three difficulty settings.
DICW: To get the DICW beat the mission where it first appears on Advance difficulty setting.
BAT: To get an Enemy Bat you will have to defeat DK in the Advance Mission where you meet him.
GLG40MM: To get this pipe bomb launcher, you need to obtain the highest score on the stage you first use it on Advance Mission mode.
GUIDED MISSILE 2: To get the Guided Missile 2, you'll need to beat the last mission in Advance Mission mode.
PSG-1: Beat the Mission in Advance Mission where you first encounter the PSG-1 and it will be unlocked.
SPAS12: You can unlock the SPAS12 by completing the mission on Advance where you first use it.
UMP: The Ump machine gun becomes unlocked after you use it to defeat the enemy on Intermediate Mission mode.

DARK CLOUD

Complete the whole game and save when prompted. From there, reload the game and spot the new location on the map. It's the Demon Shaft dungeon, which is very difficult with about 100 floors.

LEGEND OF ZELDA: ORACLE OF AGES

TREASURE HUNTING: Get the shovel from the tower and head to town. Dig around in the past. You'll find interesting items as well as money. Not every dig results in treasure so be patient.
BIGGER BOMB BAG: Level 4. When you head to Restoration Wall, push a red block to change the landscape. Backtrack through the cave. Descend a ladder near the hole. Go back to the vine sprout. Play to return to the present. Climb vine. Continue until a pool of water with a sign telling you not to throw things in. Lob a bomb into the middle. Tell the monster you threw a regular bomb in and it will make your bomb bag bigger.

X-COM: ENFORCER

GOD MODE: Press ~ to bring up the console then type in 'xgod' to enable God mode.
FLY LIKE A BIRD: Press ~ to bring up the console then type in 'xfly' to activate fly mode.
KILL: Press ~ to bring up the console then type in 'killpawns' to kill all the enemies.

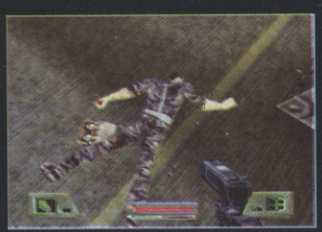
BANJO TOOIE

MULTIPLAYER JINJOS: After learning the Split-Up, Bill Drill and Hatch moves go to the Wooded Hollow and enter Heggy's Hen House. Bill Drill the boulder and use the Split-Up Pads beneath. Get Kazooie to hatch the yellow egg at the top. Jinjos is now available for multiplayer games.

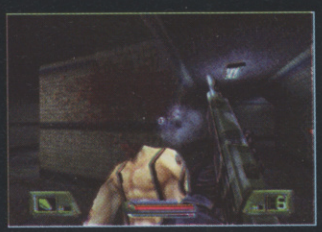
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

This game is really, really sick. It's also really, really good, so here are some bloody tips for you...

Use the shotgun to shoot off legs and make them hop around...



...or just shoot them until they die. Whichever you prefer



Or better still – how about a well-aimed head shot?

Oh my God, I'm sick! Take me to a head doctor NOW!

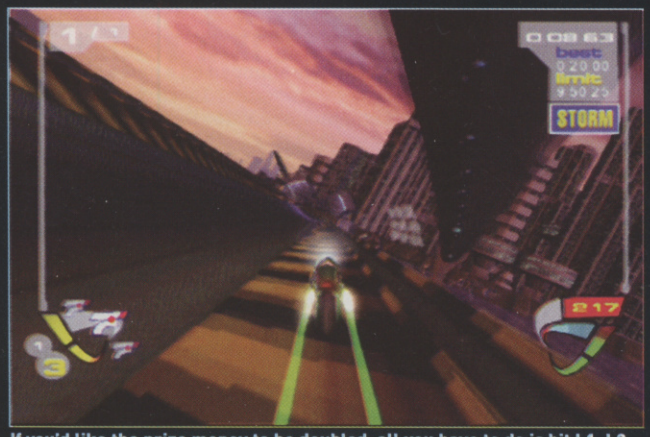
EXTREME G3

This game prides itself on speed, speed, and, er, a side order of speed. It's also got lots of cheats to toy around with. Luckily for you lot, we've speedily found them and are giving them to you for your gaming pleasure! Are we good to you, or what, eh?!

At the main menu press L1+R1, L2+R2, L1+L2, R1+R2. Enable this cheat before each race

At the team selection screen press L2, R2, L1, R1, L2+R2, L1+R1. This gives you unlimited ammo

Get all the courses by inputting L1, L1, L2, L2, R2, R2, R1, R1, L1+R1+L2+R2 at the main menu



If you'd like the prize money to be doubled, all you have to do is hit L1, L2, R2, R1, R1, R2, L2, L1 at the main menu to enable this

Race the first circuit at extreme speed by typing in the following code at the main menu: L1, L2, L1, R1, L1, R2, L1+R1, L2+R2

RUMBLE RACING

From Game Options, go to Load And Save and select password by pushing Right. Enter one of the following codes then select Yes when prompted. The car will be available from the Car Selection screen.

CAR	CODE
Blue Devil	LEAITEPUC
Buck Shot	UBTCKSTOH
Cataclysm	P1PROC1PU
Direwolf	ILQTEC3PU
Escargot	Q2PROC2YT
Gamecus	BSUIGASUM
High Roller	HGIROLREL
Interceptor	CDAAPTNIA
Jolly Roger	ILETEC1MB
Malice	ILCTEC2VB
Redneck Rocket	KCEROCTEK
Revolution	PTOATRTOI
Road Kill	AEPPROPUC
Road Trip	ABOGOBOGA
Sporticus	OPSRTISUC
Stinger	AMHBRAAMH
Thor	AMHBRAAMH
Van Itty	VTYANIYTT
Vortex	1AREXT1AR
XXS-Tomcat	NALDSHHSD

PITFALL: THE MAYAN ADVENTURE

Enable the master code by pressing L, Select, A, Select, R, A, L, Select at the title screen to get cheat mode active.

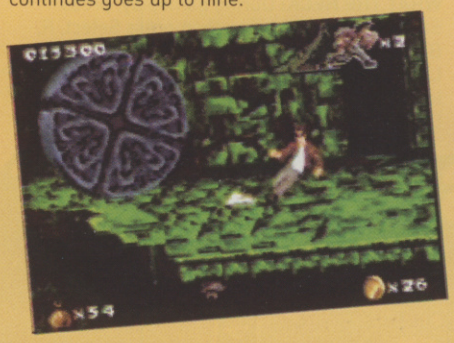
LEVEL SELECT: Enable the master code then press L or R to find a level before pressing Left to highlight Start to play on that level.

WEAPONS: Enable the master code then begin play on any level. Hold Select and press B to get 99 of each weapon.

MOVEMENT: Enable the master code then start a game on any level. Hold down Select and press the d-pad to move any way you want.

LAKAMUL RAIN FOREST: At the title screen quickly tap in A, L, A, R, A, L, Select, Select.

CONTINUES: At the continue screen, press Start quickly and continuously until remaining continues goes up to nine.



SUBMARINE TITANS

During gameplay, hit the 'Enter' button and type in one of these cheats to make things flow more smoothly: Type in AIR for full air, or type in TECH to get all the technology. For full energy type in ENERGY, and type in FOW to reveal the map. To get silicon type in SILICON, for metal type METAL, GOLD for gold, and CORIUM for corium. That should be enough to finish the game. If you can't remember that, the Navy does not want you. You're a walking deathtrap, so begone!

YOUR BEST TIPS

Every month the best reader tip will be printed and will score a prize of one of the latest games. Send your tips to: barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk or

THE DOGHOUSE,
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LONDON W1P 5FF.

WORLD DESTRUCTION LEAGUE: WAR JETZ

UNLOCKS	CODE
Codes	TWLVCHTS
Levels	JMPTT
Invincible	DNGDM
FMV	GRTD

X-MEN MUTANT ACADEMY 2

Unlock everything in the game by tapping in the following code at the main menu. Just press Select, Down, R2, L1, R1, L2. If typed in correctly, you will then hear a noise to confirm the code. This will give you all costumes, characters and FMV.

After using the master code, hold L1 whilst selecting Cyclops and he will be replaced by Spider-Man

Use the master code then highlight Magneto and hold L1 to reveal the Professor in his wheelchair

To get Juggernaught and Psylocke, complete game as Wolverine and Psylocke or just use the code above

If you like playing with girls, then you should really pick Psylocke. You won't regret it!

MAX PAYNE

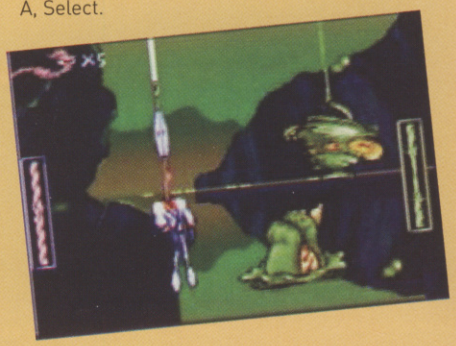
To enable some of the following weapons access the console by starting maxpayne.exe with the command line parameter '-developer'. Run the game and access the console with F12 then type in one of the following:

WEAPON/ITEM	CHEAT CODE
Baseball Bat	getbaseballbat
Beretta	getberetta
Dual Berettas	getdualberetta
Sawed off shotgun	getsawedshotgun
Pump action shotgun	getpumpshotgun
Desert Eagle	getdeserteagle
Ingram	getingram
Dual Ingrams	getdualingram
TMP5	getmp5
Colt Commando	getcoltcommando
Jackhammer	getjackhammer
M-79	getm79
Sniper Rifle	getsniper
Molotov cocktail	getmolotov
Grenade	getgrenade
Painkillers	getpainkillers

EARTHWORM JIM

It must be a little bit strange being a worm, don't you think?

BUTTVILLE: During gameplay, press Start to pause the game then press L, A, Up, R, A, R, A, Select.



DOWN THE TUBES: During gameplay, press Start to pause the game then press Up, L, Down, A, R, A.

FOR PETE'S SAKE: During gameplay, press Start to pause the game and then press R, L, R, L, A, R.

LEVEL 5: During gameplay, press Start to pause the game and then press R, L, A, B(2), A, L, R.

SNOT A PROBLEM: During gameplay, press Start to pause the game then press R, Up, Select, L, R, Left.

WHAT THE HECK: During gameplay, press Start to pause the game then press Select, R, B, Down, L, B.

LEVEL SELECT: During gameplay, press Start to pause the game then press Right, R, B, A, L, L, A, R.

REALLY STUCK

Absolutely stumped on a game? Ridiculed by your mates? There is hope: The Computer and Video Games tips helpline.

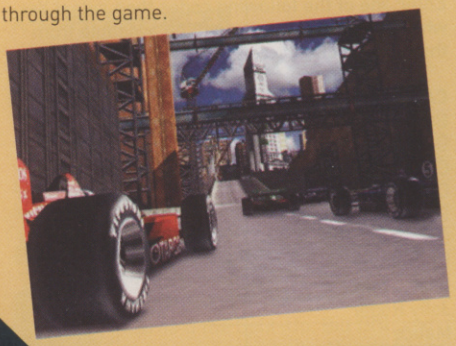
0906 466 4659

Open seven days a week, 8am-11pm. On the very rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team, who guarantee to find you an answer within 24 hours.

Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In case of problems, please call Customer Services on 0870 800 6155.

CART FURY: CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

CARS, DRIVERS AND TRACKS: For all the cars at the Cheat menu, simply bash in Triangle, X, Triangle, Square, L2, Triangle. At the Driver Selection screen, just press R1 to get more drivers or press L1 to get more cars. At the Cheat menu, input R1, Triangle, X(2), R2, L1 for all tracks. Now that should help you cruise through the game.

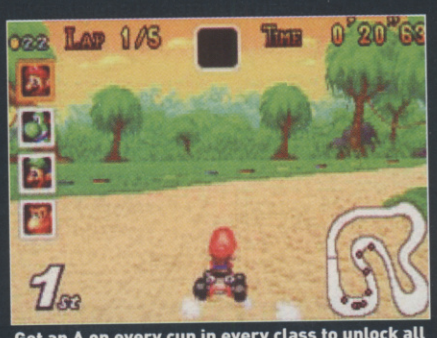


MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

Wow! Mario Kart in the palm of your sweaty little hands... if only they'd included the original tracks as well. Oh, they did, and a whole lot more.

Unlock the Special Cup in each class by getting gold on all the other races of that class

Collect 100 or more coins during a cup to unlock a bunch of extra tracks. Press L or R to see 'em



Get an A on every cup in every class to unlock all the original courses from Super Mario Kart

ARE YOU THE DON OF GAMES? THEN TAKE THE CVG CHALLENGE

You may think you rock at games but how can you be sure? Easy, just pick a challenge below and send us your best result [take a photo of the winning screen or record on a video as evidence]. Then buy the mag the month after and see if you make the top five.

NEW CHALLENGES THIS MONTH: Each month we will set three new challenges as well as sometimes updating existing leagues.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2 (DC)
Get the fastest possible time on the Green Forest level. Beat Pete's time of 2:30. Come on if you think you're fast enough.

EXTREME G3 (PS2)
Enter Time Trial and choose to race on Muon Harbour. Get the fastest lap time you can. Beat Alex's time of 1.03.

SUPER MARIO KART (SNES)
On the SNES version get the fastest time on Ghost Valley 2. Beat Dan's time of 5:00. Play with Psylocke – she's the best-looking!

LAST MONTH'S RESULTS: This month's three winners will each receive three months' worth of everyone's favourite mag, plus a CVG T-shirt. Sweet.

CRAZY TAXI 2

1	651.08	Danny Arden
2	646.51	Edward Veal
3	637.62	Johnny Rice
4	628.75	Alan Riki
5	622.48	Rod James

ISS PRO EVOLUTION 2

1	41	David Rickman
2	36	M. Perone
3	35	David Ellis
4	29	Mike Peters
5	25	John Dines

GRAN TURISMO 2

1	1.11.456	Joe Robson
2	1.13.371	Paul James Webster
3	1.13.672	Andrew Abbott
4	1.14.023	Mark Lewis
5	1.15.662	Jackie Wicks

HOW TO ENTER:
Take a photo or screenshot of the screen showing your score. Write your name, address and score on a piece of paper. Send your entry with your proof and a recent pic of yourself to the usual address, marked: CVG Challenge, or scan your pics and email: barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk.

CHALLENGE CVG
BEAT US AND BOAST

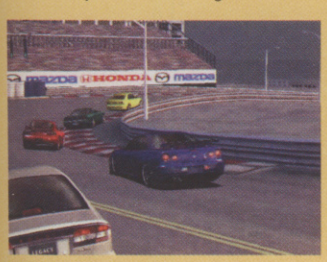
You get the unique opportunity to play us at our own game. Follow the rules below and come see how good you are or how bad we are.

CHALLENGE 1

Game: Quake 3 Arena
Formats: PC/Mac
Rules: Highest frag count
To take part: Log on to our server called CVG House of Pain [IP: 192.168.0.1 or 62.49.226.118] between 4pm and 8pm on Monday 3rd December. Just don't log off until we have your contact details.

CHALLENGE 2

Games: GT3/Mario Kart Super Circuit/Unreal Tournament
Formats: PS2/GBA/DC
Rules: We make 'em up as we go along
To take part: Send your name and contact details to the usual address. Mark the envelope Challenge CVG or e-mail barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk. Write in no more than 20 words why you reckon you can have us. If you are one of the two best be prepared to back up your words with action after we invite you to our dungeon where we will slay you in a brutal fashion.



We love this more than our mums. Life is sweet, ain't it?

We love this more than life itself. Who needs reality? Not us!

CHEATS UNLIMITED
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Alex F's Player Man.
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Alundra 1 & 2
Army Men Series
Atlantis
Banjo Kazooie
Banjo Tooie
Black & White
Blade
Bloody Roar 3
Bouncer
Breath of Fire 3 & 4
Broken Sword 1 & 2
C. & Conq. Series
C-12 Final Resistance
Castlevania
Champ. Man. Series
Chase the Express
Chicken Run
C. McRae Rally 1 & 2
Commandos 1 & 2
Conkers Bad Fur Day
Constructor
Crash Team Racing
D Mirra BMX 1 & Max
Duke. Nukem Series
Dark Cloud
Dave Mirra BMX 2
Digimon World
Dino Crisis 1 & 2
Discworld 2 & Noir
Dracula Last Sanct.
Dracula Resurrection
Dragonball Z
Driver 1 & 2
Dune
Dynasty Warriors 2
Escape Monkey Island
Evil Dead: Hail King
Extermination
FA PL. F'ball Man. '00
Fear Effect 1 & 2
Fifa 2001
FIFA Series
Final Fantasy 7, 8 & 9
Golden Eye
Gran Turismo 1, 2 & 3
Grand Theft Auto 1&2
Grinch
GT Advance Champ.
Harvest Moon
Hidden & Dangerous
Hogs of War
In Cold Blood
ISS Pro Evolution 1&2
Leg. of Kain: S. Reaver
Legend of Dragoon
LMA Manager 00&01
Mario Kart Sup Circuit
Martian Gothic
Mat Hoffman's BMX
Max Payne
MDK 2
Medal of Honor 1 & 2
MediEvil 1 & 2
Men In Black
Metal Gear Solid
Metro. Street Racer
Midnight Club
Monkey Hero
Mortal Kombat Trilogy
007 Racing
Onimusha: Warlords
Operation Winback
Parasite Eve 1 & 2
Perfect Dark
Pokemon (All Colours)
Premier Man. Series
Rainbow Six
Rayman 1, 2 & Adv.
Red Faction
Resident Evil 1, 2 & 3
Resident Evil: C. Ver.
Rogue Spear
Roller Coaster Tycoon
Star Wars Series
Shadow of Memories
Shadowman
Sheep, Dog & Wolf
Shenmue
Silent Hill
Simpsons Wrestling
Sky Odyssey
Soldier Of Fortune
Sonic Adventure 1 & 2
South Park Rally
Spec Ops Series
Spiderman
Spyro 1, 2 & 3
Star Trek: Invasion
Super Mario Advance
Syphon Filter 1 & 2
Tenchu 1 & 2
The Italian Job
The Sims
TWINE
Theme Hospital
Theme Park World
Time Crisis 1 & 2
Time Splitters
Tomb Raider 1-5
Tombi 1 & 2
Tomorrow Never Dies
Tony Hawks 1&2
Toy Story 2
Tunguska
Turok 1, 2 & 3
Urban Chaos
Vagrant Story
Vampire Hunter
Vanishing Point
Warzone 2100
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WWF Smackdown1&2
X-Files
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Zelda (Series)

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It's only you

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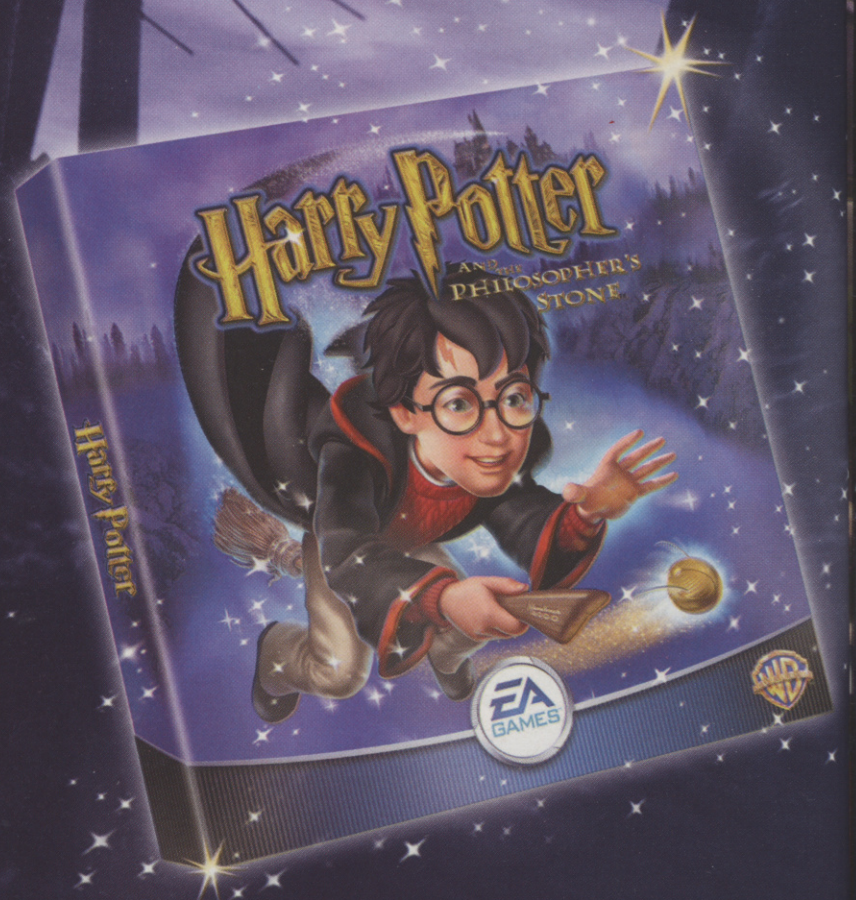

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A DIFFERENT ADVENTURE
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PlayStation

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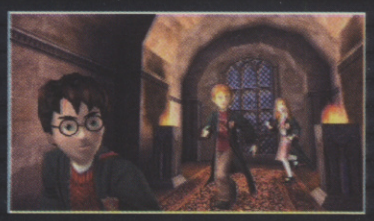
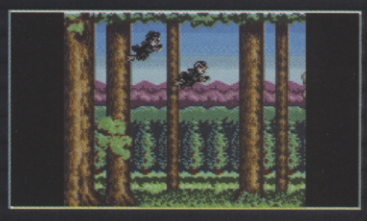


PC CD-ROM



GAME BOY COLOR

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EA GAMES™

FORMAT: PSONE, GBA, GBC AND PC **OUT:** NOVEMBER 16 **PUBLISHER:** EA **WORDS:** LEE SKITTRELL

Harry Potter™

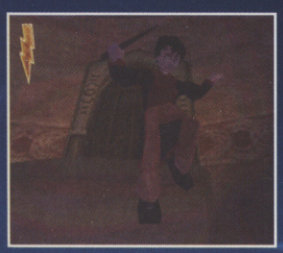
HARRY POTTER

REVIEWS BLOWOUT

Grip your wands firmly – we've reviewed all four Harry Potter games across the formats!

ONE STORY, FOUR AMAZING ADVENTURES

The whole world and his owl loves Harry Potter. If you're one of the millions of Potter fans who've read the books over and over and plan on going to the cinema to watch the movie more times than is healthy, then you're going to love what EA has done with the Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone licence. Four completely different games for four separate consoles. Each game follows the plot of the book closely, but the action is completely different. Before you get stuck into our full reviews of each one on the following pages, here's a brief rundown of what they're all about...



The **PSone** version is a 3D action-adventure that starts off on the first day of term at Hogwarts School Of Witchcraft And Wizardry. Harry has to explore the school and grounds, learn spells, find secrets and piece together the mystery of the Philosopher's Stone and you-know-who.

Potter on **PC** plays in a similar way to the PSone version but has been developed by a completely different team. The layout of Hogwarts is totally different and there's more emphasis on exploration. Graphics are gorgeous and look just like the film sets.

The action comes thick and fast on **Game Boy Advance** with Harry puzzling and trouncing trolls with spells. There are massive environments to explore and lots of creatures to battle, but the mazes and switch pulling puzzles are tough.

Harry on **Game Boy Color** is the most ambitious of all. This Pokemon-influenced RPG is a mammoth quest with turn-based battles and collectable cards. Trade rare cards with other players to complete the set and gain awesome attacks.

Explore Hogwarts, learn spells, play Quidditch, be Harry!

Format: PSone
Cost: £29.99
Out: Now
Developer: Argonaut
Publisher: Electronic Arts

You step into the great hallway, your new wizard's cloak scratching at your neck, your wand slippery in your sweaty palms. The stony walls, stained glass and ancient tapestries seem enormous, the hustle and bustle of students running about overwhelming. It's the first day of term at a brand new school, but don't worry – this game is no boring class simulator.

From the moment you start playing Harry Potter on PSone you're up to your cloak tails in mystery. There's Draco Malfoy and his cronies who have it in for Potter from the off; the sinister Professor Snape, and a mysterious and menacing hooded figure who's trying to hurt Harry at regular intervals. And on top of it all, Harry's also got to learn something useful while he's at school – it's your job to help him through the everyday classroom stuff, all the while piecing together the plot as it unfolds.

The first boss fight is against Malfoy, Crabbe and Goyle – watch for those crackers!

Run away from the giant troll in the Crash Bandicoot-style chase level

Follow this nice sparkling Unicorn blood in the spooky Forbidden Forest

SCHOOL'S IN!

The game starts with a brilliant introduction to school life at Hogwarts and begins in the main hallway. The Great Hall acts as a kind of hub for the rest of the game and at the start most of the doors are locked. As you complete sections of the adventure these locked areas open up, giving you access to new areas and secret rooms. Collecting the Every-Flavour Beans dotted about also grants you access to locked Portrait Rooms, and some secret chambers can even be found by searching for hidden switches in bookcases and statues.

The game environment is massive and exploring the school and its grounds for secrets is a big part of the fun. Controlling Harry is made pretty much idiot-proof by the auto-jump feature. There is no jump button, instead Harry will leap automatically at the edge of platforms. It's a neat touch for younger players who might struggle with the platforms but it does mean older players will blast through the early sections pretty swiftly.

JUST HOW YOU WANT IT

Both Warner Bros and J K Rowling have had a big hand in the development of the games, and it really shows. All of the games have a perfect Harry Potter feel and the locations, characters and spells all fit perfectly with the images in your head.

What's most impressive about the PSone version is that the developer has managed to capture the magical feel of Hogwarts and its grounds in a 3D environment on ageing PSone technology. There's loads of speech crammed in, and the characters sound just like the movie stars. Where new spells or new characters were needed for the game, Rowling herself created new fiction, making sure everything remains authentic. The Witches and Wizards cards you pick up as bonuses are especially cool as you can store them in a sticker album-style book called the Folio Magi and read up about historical magical figures in the Potter universe. It's almost too much for Potter fans to take and makes you want to find every card!

Quidditch looks just like it does in the movie, thanks to the close Warner relationship

The chess challenge had to be re-worked to make it easier but is still recognisable

The beautiful game looks lovely on PSone

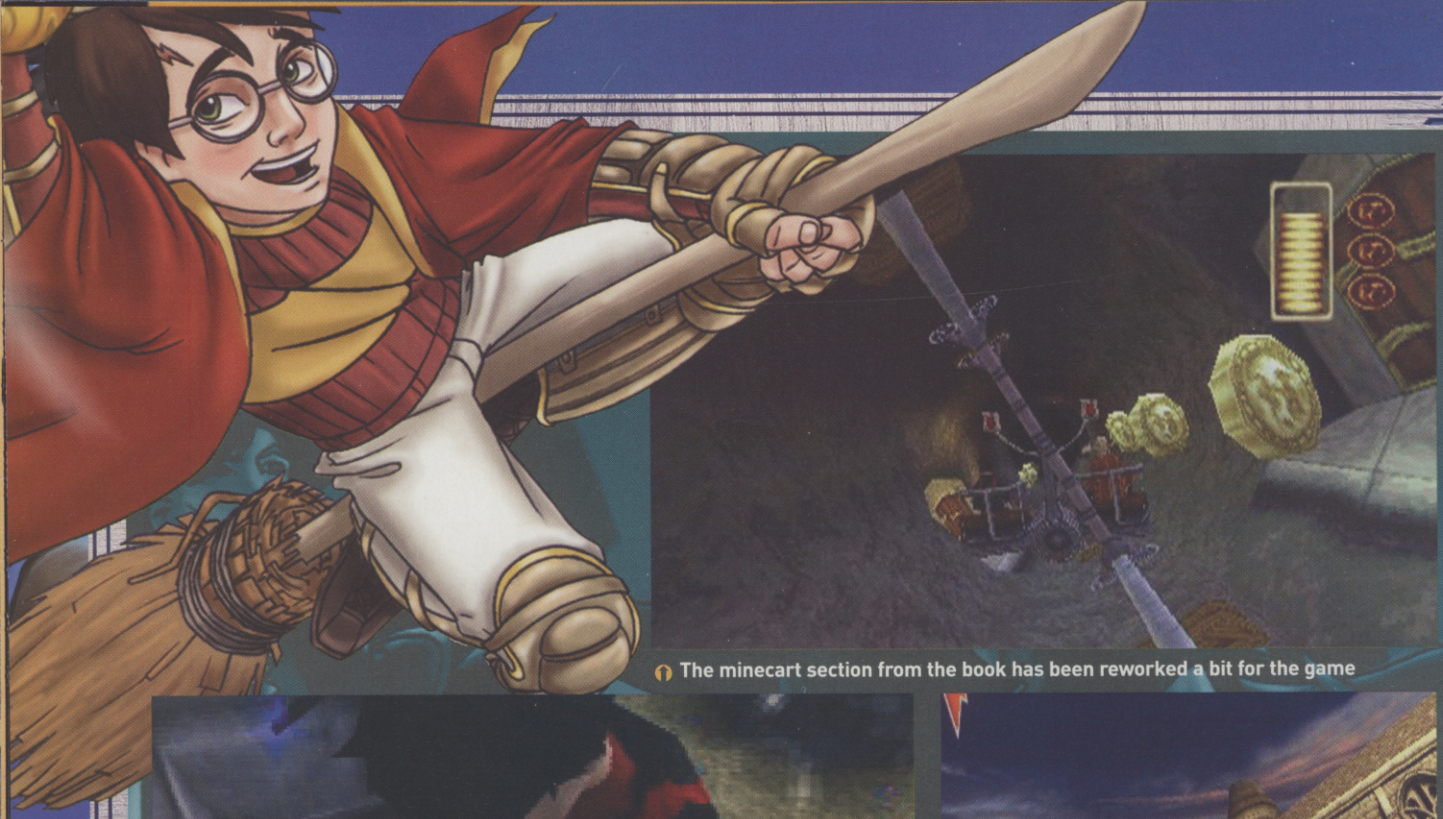
Mini-boss fights like this gargoyle battle pepper things up nicely

Pufferpods thrown at trolls make them sneeze

Headmaster Dumbledore is like a wiser, thinner Santa type

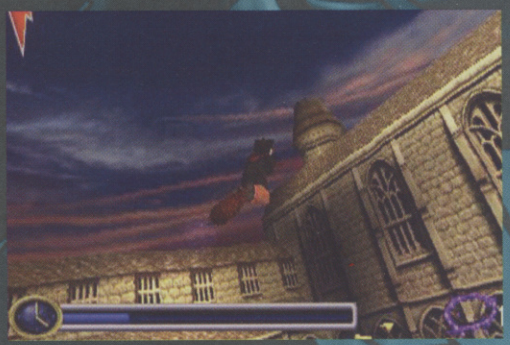
You even get to help Hagrid hatch his pet dragon, Norbert!

The silvery outline is Harry in his father's invisibility cloak



The minecart section from the book has been reworked a bit for the game

These bubbles help lift you to higher platforms in Hagrid's garden



Visit Madam Hooch to brush up on your broom handling skills

SPEAK AND SPELL

As with the book, learning and using spells in the game are important parts of becoming a true wizard. There's a healthy selection of spells to master and the classes usually pop up between adventure sections. Each works essentially the same way, with Harry having to first find the correct classroom and get there on time. Once inside you have to perform a series of rhythm-action button-pressing challenges to learn how to cast the spell, or, in Snape's class, mix the correct potion.

Once you've learnt a spell you can use it in the main game, and Harry will automatically use the correct spell for the situation he's in. To rescue Raymond's lost kitten you use the Wingardium Leviosa spell to levitate it out of the well. To set bewitched bushes on fire you use the Incendio spell. This automatic spell casting is another example of the game being aimed at the lower end of its target audience, and eliminates any chance of getting stuck at a puzzle by not knowing which spell to use.

SIMPLE PLEASURES

But while Harry Potter on PSone is one of those rare games that's tailored for a very specific audience, we reckon almost everyone will be able to enjoy it. Okay, it's true that the majority of the action has been simplified, and while this makes the game fairly easy to play through, it also gives everything a cracking pace as the story unfolds. You'll never be lost for somewhere to go or for something to do as each completed area opens up another close by. The superbly atmospheric cutscenes also help point you in the right direction if you feel lost.

In the main, the game is fairly simple to move through, a conscious decision by EA, which wanted a title people would play through and enjoy, rather than one that younger players in particular might get stuck on. The game does get harder later, especially with the sequence of Professor's challenges through the secret trapdoor and the final battle with Voldemort. And even after completion, there's plenty to keep you coming back, like hunting down all the secrets, and playing Quidditch over and over. Harry Potter on PSone is a fantastic adventure with more than enough magic under its pointy hat to appeal to everyone, and a perfect game to put on the Christmas list.

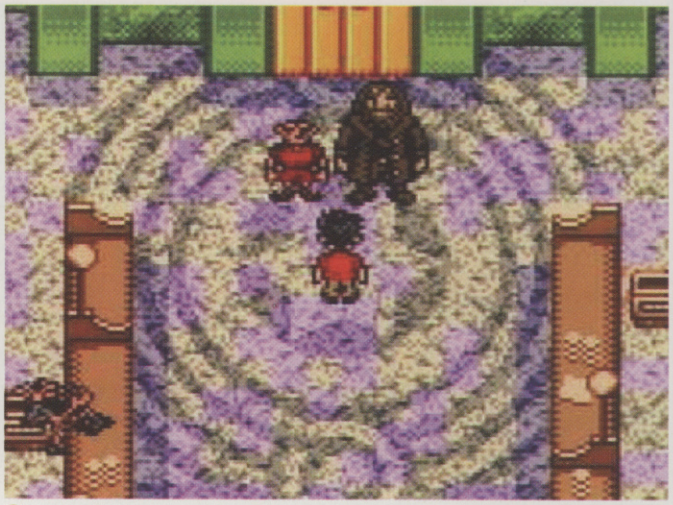
CVG RECKONS

Perfection for Potter fans and a great adventure in its own right for everyone else. For sure, it's easy, but that doesn't stop it being brilliant fun.

8/10

When enchanted knights attack, only a Flipendo spell will do

The Great Hall at Hogwarts – looks pretty nice for a GBC game



Hunt out Gringotts in Diagon Alley and grab some cash for your school supplies

Harry wants to beat Ash and Pikachu at their own game

Format: GBC
Cost: £29.99
Out: Now
Players: 1 (link-up)
Developer: Know Wonder
Publisher: Electronic Arts

This is the version to appease all Harry Potter fans enraged by the fact the other three versions gloss over the start of the story. Harry Potter on GBC kicks off in the magical London street Diagon Alley, with Hagrid helping Harry get kitted out in his school gear. Then it's onto Platform 9 3/4 to catch the Hogwarts Express. You even get to cross the lake by rowing boat. Who needs a £1,000 PC, eh?

CARDS AND SPELLS

Wizard Cards and the Folio Magi play a vital role. At the start you choose one of four decks of cards. Different cards give you different spells and the only way to gain the whole range is by swapping and trading cards with other players who picked a different deck at the start.

CVG RECKONS

There's no Quidditch, but otherwise it's all you could want from a handheld Potter game – and it starts at Diagon Alley too!
8/10

Choose from four different decks at the start of the game

You get to explore everywhere, including Hagrid's Hut

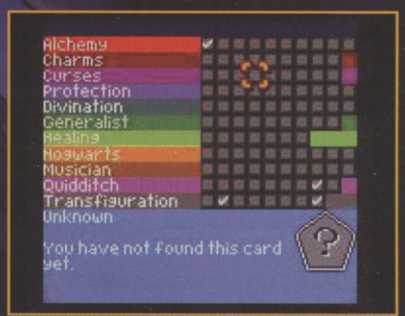
POKE-POTTER

But sticking close to the story of the book isn't the only upper hand that GBC Potter's got. The game is an extraordinarily deep RPG adventure in a Pokemon style, with turn-based battles, mini-quests, stats galore and even special items such as enchanted shoes and a wizard's hat to equip. But don't be afraid – Harry Potter's GBC adventure is just as accessible as the Pokemon games. Only with a twist of that added Potter magic.

I HIT YOU, YOU HIT ME

Anyone used to playing Pokemon or Final Fantasy will be right at home with GBC Harry Potter as it uses a similar turn-based battle system. Better yet, the battles aren't totally random as you can see where an encounter cloud is lurking on screen. The bigger the fight, the bigger the cloud. It's wicked.

The sparkly dark blob above Harry is an encounter – do you run or fight?



Check the cards you've collected on the sub-screens and trade with friends

Hermione in your hands and Potter in your palms!

Format: GBA
Cost: £34.99
Out: 23rd November
Players: 1
Developer: Know Wonder
Publisher: Electronic Arts

Throw 32-bits of handheld console power into a cauldron, stir in some classic puzzles and top-down exploration then leave to simmer and bubble. The result? An unusual action adventure that's marred by a few too many tricky puzzle sections and a relative lack of originality. Harry Potter on GBA is like like a platform game without the jumping, and as such feels a little bit flat.

CVG RECKONS

A solid adventure but not a patch on the GBC version, which seems a bit topsy-turvy to us. Ideal for all you Pokemon-haters, though.
7/10

FRUSTRATE-O-POTTER

You spend much of the game exploring the vast locations and to keep it feeling fresh there's a whole army of tricks and traps. The maze-like section in Hagrid's garden involves using your Flipendo spell to roll pufferpods onto switches, while the midnight sneak level gives you limited vision and lurking prefects to avoid in the school hallways.

The trouble comes when you make a mistake like falling from a ledge or letting Harry faint. Do so and all puzzle items will reset themselves and you have to go through the whole thing again, making for some intensely frustrating moments.

Collect beans for maximum house points

Chase and grab the snitch in top-down Quidditch matches

Use the spells you learn to take out the gnome infestation

Rummage through bookcases for secrets and switches. But don't make a mistake or you'll go through the whole thing again

Install Harry on your hard drive for yet more magical adventuring

Format: PC
Cost: £29.99
Out: Now
Players: 1
Developer: Know Wonder
Publisher: Electronic Arts

Potter on PC plays a lot like the PlayStation version but with much bigger environments and prettier visuals. Where the PC version excels is that it lets you fully explore Hogwarts. The spell lessons are like extended challenges that take place in magical obstacle courses. As you learn more, you have to combine them in lengthy sequences to solve puzzles and you're rewarded with bonus beans and challenge stars for discovering the hundreds of secrets dotted about. More bonuses mean more housepoints to make sure you bag that seven-year overdue Gryffindor victory.

LOW SPEC SPELLS

Harry Potter on PC is an ace platformer and has hints of Mario 64 in there, as well as bits borrowed from Crash and other platform legends. Our one gripe is that while it's prettier than the PSone version, the game is low on graphical detail. The good news is that it'll run on really low-spec machines, so everyone can enjoy the Potter experience.

Alohomora opens sealed doors and secret routes

Use the Flipendo spell to knock away obstacles

Using the keyboard to fly the broomstick feels weird at first

CVG RECKONS

Clearly not one for the Quake 3 frag-monster, but it's not meant to be. A great platformer and a brilliant way to explore Hogwarts too!
8/10

Harry Potter Giveaway

Don't be a total troll. Enter this awesome free-for-all

Want to feel like a wizard in your own home? Then we've got just the thing for you with our Harry Potter giveaway! We've teamed up with Electronic Arts and Warner Bros. to bring you a £1,200 PC, a copy of Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone to play on it, and a Harry Potter bike.

WIZARD!
All you have to do to stand a chance of bagging this ultimate Potter package is fill in the coupon below and the first entry pulled out of the pointy wizard's hat gets the loot!

SPECS TEST!
Playing Potter on this top PC will be a dream. If you're tech-headed, here's what you get. If you don't know your RAM from your spam then all you need to know is this is one of the finest PC packages currently available. The Axis 1400WK was awarded, amongst other accolades, the prestigious status of "Labs Winner" with an outstanding six out of six rating by our sister mag PC Pro.

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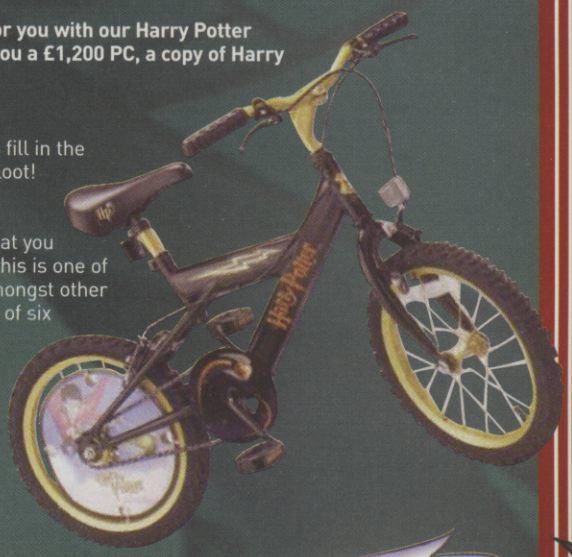

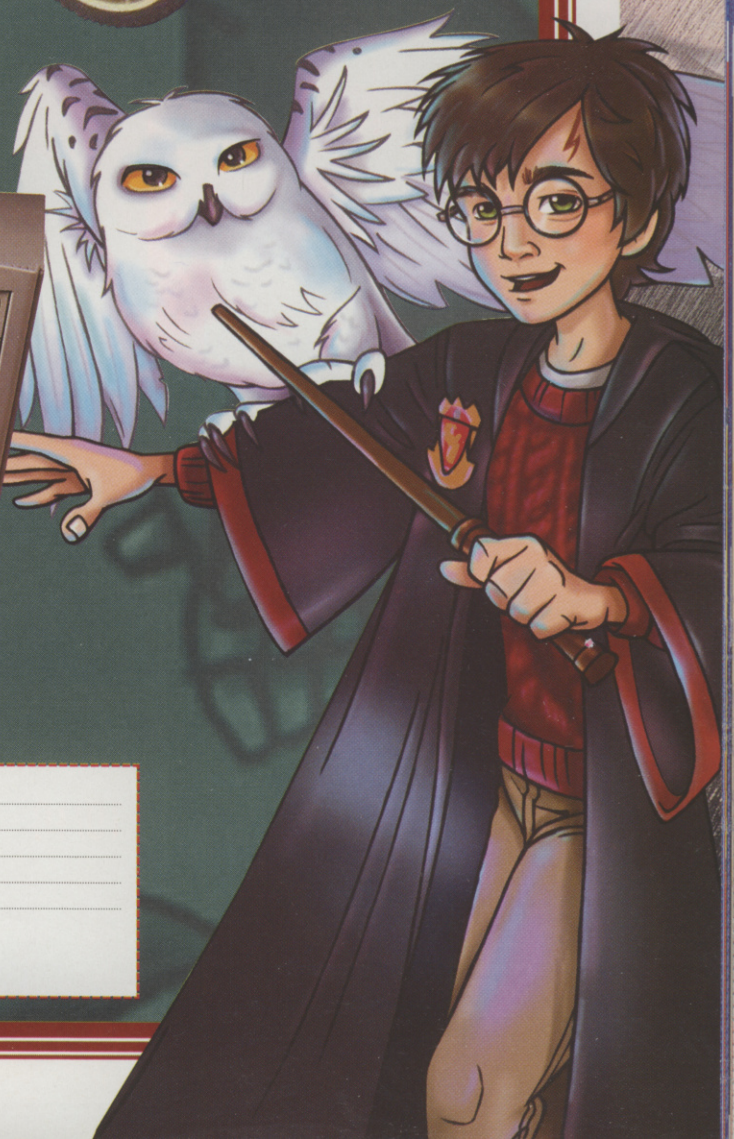

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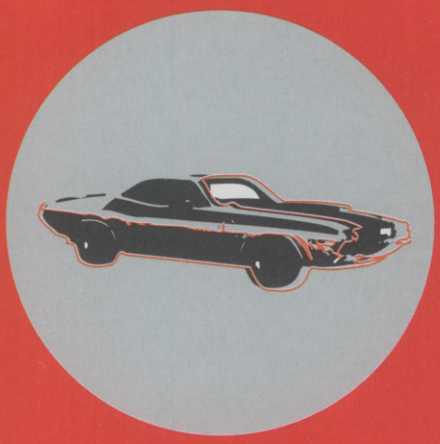

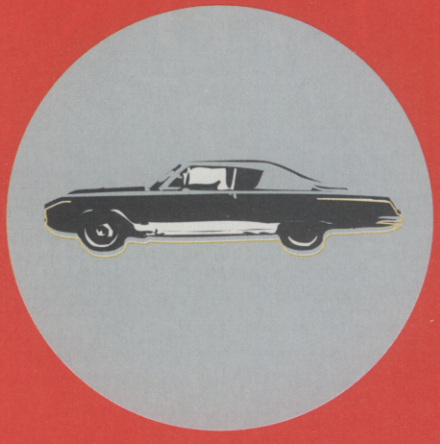

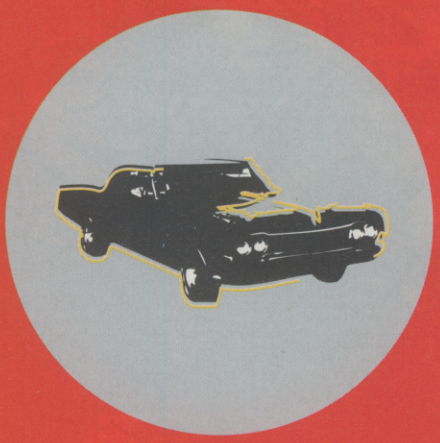

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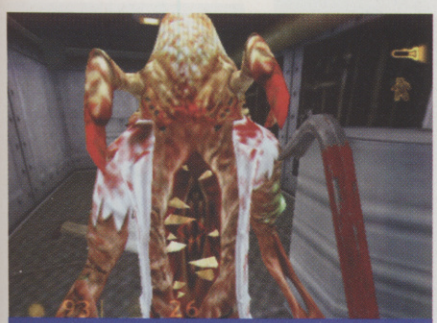
WHAT THE SCORES MEAN

1 – Argh, it stinks!
2 – Abysmal
3 – Sucks a fat one
4 – Pretty dire
5 – Very average
6 – Hmm, could be for you
7 – Pretty tasty
8 – Very good
9 – Essential
10 – An unmissable belter that defines the genre

Reviews

Stacks of releases played 'til our eyeballs popped

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 94



HALF-LIFE 112

VIRTUA TENNIS 2 104

GRAND THEFT AUTO III 98

DEVIL MAY CRY 100

PLAYSTATION 2

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	94
Grand Theft Auto III	98
Devil May Cry	100
Soul Reaver 2	106
Smuggler's Run 2	109
Half-Life	112
SmackDown! Just Bring It	116
The Simpsons Road Rage	118
SSX Tricky	118
Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder	119
Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath Of Cortex	120
Batman Vengeance	122
Supercar Street Challenge	122
Capcom Vs SNK 2	123
DNA	123
Top Gun	123
New York Racer	124
Polaroid Pete	124

PSONE

Syphon Filter 3	114
LMA Manager 2002	109
Men In Black: The Series-Crashdown	122

PC

Alien vs Predator 2	102

DREAMCAST

Virtua Tennis 2	104
Shenmue 2	114
90 Minutes	122

GAME BOY ADVANCE

Doom	130
ISS	130
Gradius Advance	130
Ecks V Sever	131
Phalanx	131
Warioland 4	132
Super Street Fighter II Turbo Revival	132
Lucky Luke	132
Tetris Worlds	132
Kao The Kangaroo	132
WWF: Road To Wrestlemania	133
Prehistorik Man	133
Planet Monsters	133
Powerpuff Girls	133
Super Dodge Ball Advance	134
Batman Vengeance	134
Driven	134
Dexter's Laboratory	134
Casper	134

GAME BOY COLOR

Pokemon Crystal	128

The Foundry is where you start off in TH3. Just take a look at the maze of stairways and the intricacy of the surroundings. And it's all yours for the skating...

Keep an eye on the balance bar to avoid bloodshed

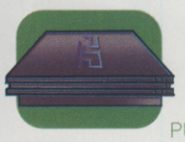
MOLTEN MAYHEM

The environments in TH3 are so dense with objects (and shape-shifting landscapes) that there are limitless tricking possibilities. In this third instalment, the action feels more 3D in the sense that loads of the action takes place above ground – on wires, high rails, steel walkways, and other insane high-flyer obstacles. These thickly detailed and brilliantly laid-out environments, when mixed with the awesome flexible capabilities of your skater, make for an experience like no other.

Use the stacks of

Tony Hawk's

The Hawk proves that Heaven is indeed a halfpipe. Xtreme bliss



COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOVEMBER 28**
PLAYERS: **1-4 (Online)**
DEVELOPER: **NEVERSOFT**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Heaven's got a new look. The clouds and angels have been kicked out to make room for highways, haunted houses, cruise ships and planks of wood with four wheels. Welcome to Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3. It's faster, more hardcore, bigger, bolder, and online. So step right up for the ultimate extreme experience.

Skaters look and move better than in TH2

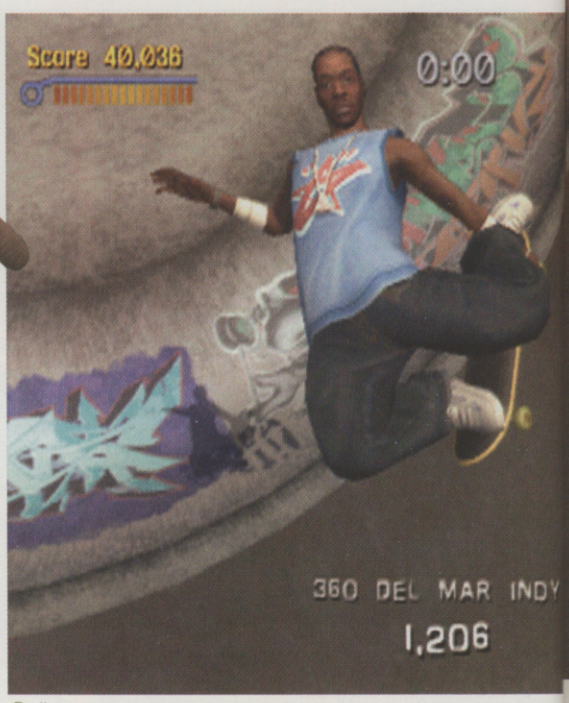
A GIANT LEAP FOR SKATEKIND

You've probably seen our score already, so we'll start by saying it's totally justified. To put it in context, we got the outstanding DC version of TH2 running next to TH3 on PS2, and were blown away by the originality, huge improvements and innovation.

Every aspect of the new game outshines the fantastic efforts of the last instalment: the visuals, soundtrack, environments, gameplay, and the multiplayer mode – you can now play PS2 online all over the world! Some losers will whine, "It's just a sequel, with a few new bits chucked in". Wrong!

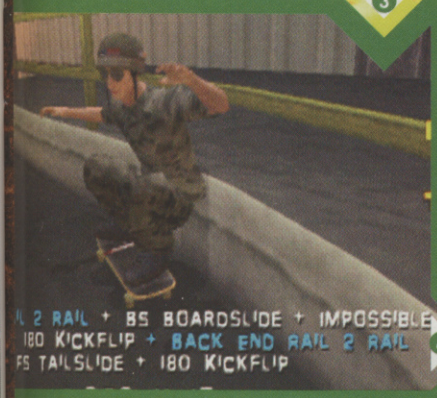
Online play and some stunning changes throughout mark a fresh direction for the series, and make this the finest extreme sports title ever.

Challenges see you stopping pickpockets, causing earthquakes, impressing bikini girls, and grinding bowls of molten steel. Your peepers will be in paradise when you take a ride through the dazzling scenarios that are home to these crazily kooky tasks.



"I'm like a bird!" yells Kareem. Whatever, just don't lay any

Try to avoid falling into this pit of molten steel!

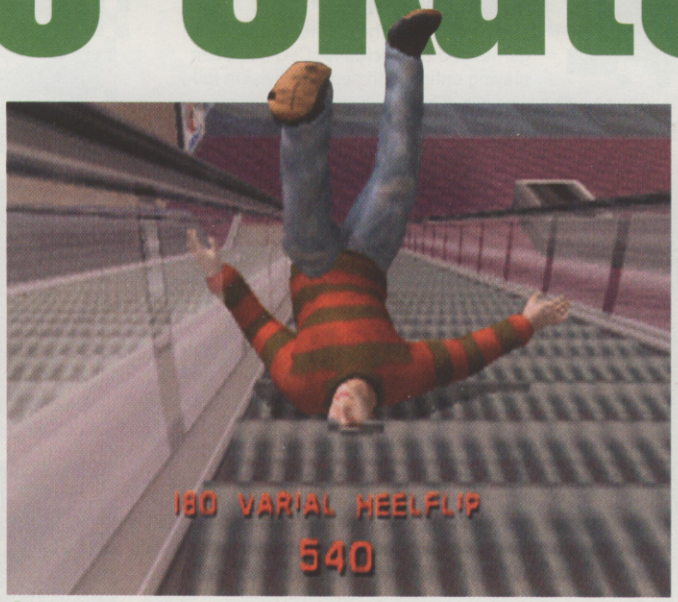


objects and railings to nail outrageous combos

The top of the metal press becomes a handy ramp. Kickflip through the machinery, but don't get crushed!

Pro Skater 3

logs on *my* shoulder, dude



The new bailing animations make the action look more realistic than before

CVG FACT

This is the first PS2 game to offer us online gaming. Truly historic.

Neversoft has seriously come up with the goods, hurling nine massive unlockable levels at us – Foundry, Canada, Los Angeles, Suburbia, Airport, Skate Island, Tokyo, Rio, and Cruise Ship. Three remastered levels from the original Tony game can also be unlocked, plus there are 20 pre-made parks in the Park Editor. However, it's the detail, graphics, and depth of the nine main stages that make TH3 tower above any competition.

Tokyo skatepark is lined with neon strips

ALIVE AND TRICKIN'

Every area is packed with people, and you get bonus scores if a spectator sees you pull off a cool stunt. As well as walking around and watching you skate, sometimes they'll jump out of your way or whack you to the ground, depending on their mood.

This interaction breathes extra life into the environments. There are creatures, cars that react to your actions, and other crazy stuff going on in the background to keep the intensity and realism alive. The number of obstacles and details packed into each stage means there are endless possibilities for trick combinations – you'll never run the same route twice. The levels are huge, and almost endlessly replayable.

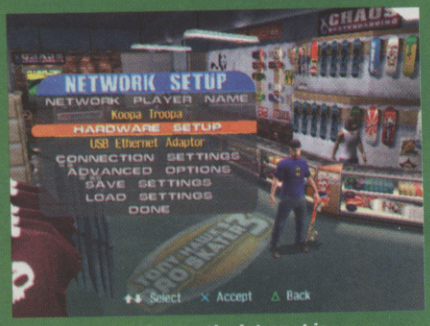
Tasty backdrops and brilliant objectives don't count for much if the skater controls

ONLINE SKATES

Getting online is easier than you could possibly imagine. You simply select the Network play mode, put in your player name, and then select a hardware device – you can use either of two third-party 56k USB Modems, or if you've got a broadband connection, one of two USB Ethernet adaptors. All are listed in the TH3 manual.

After you're hooked up and connected, it's just a case of joining a server and going totally nuts against the other skaters online. With four modes of play – Trick Attack, Graffiti, Slap and King of the Hill – available on all unlocked courses, the action feels constantly fresh and exhilarating. Also, you can chat to other people in the game by typing out messages.

But make sure you play nice, or you could find yourself banned from a game. Our only reservation is the fact that we have only been able to play TH3 with a broadband connection (there was absolutely no lag), but if past experiences are anything to go by – Quake III Arena on PC or DC – using a 56k modem may well result in painful delays. However, if ever there was a reason to get broadband, here it is. Vive la revolution!



Setting yourself up on the Internet is ridiculously easy... so what's stopping you?

Showing off your skills to the LA firemen won't get you a ride in their shiny red truck

aren't up to scratch, but as usual TH3 excels in this department. The skaters' speed has been boosted, and the fluidity and flexibility of their movement has also improved.

Linking massive tricks combos around the multi-levelled environments feels fluid and instinctive. Rookies who find the pace of TH3 tricky at first will be up to speed in no time with the new Tutorial mode.

For added flexibility, the new Revert system lets you continue strings of stunts after landing from a halfpipe, enabling you to piece together amazing combos. And there are tons of new grinds, flip tricks, grabs and special moves. Plus, the addition of special move manuals, like handstands, makes flat-level play much more exciting.

GLOBAL GREATNESS

The real icing is the online aspect of the game. In a UK exclusive, CVG has been playing online with some Activision folk, smashing into and out-tricking each other in the four multiplayer modes. The online revolution is here and it's amazing (see left).

TH3 re-establishes the Hawk as the don of extreme sports gaming, with its blend of blistering action, original challenges, top graphics and online multiplayer joy. So leg it to your local games shop and demand a copy of Tony Hawk's 3. It'll be one of the best purchases of your life, guaranteed.

COMPETITION JOY!

Jap metallers The Mad Capsule Markets are featured in the TH3 soundtrack. We've got two sets of tickets for their gig on December 4 at The Mean Fiddler, London, and ten copies of their CD 'OSC-DIS'. Answer this question and send it to us, marked 'TH3 Compo'. QUESTION: Which country do The Mad Capsule Markets hail from?

TMCM: Mad, but our compo is madder

The Suburbia level has a trailer park section, a BBQ section, and, of course, a, um, ahh, haunted house?!

CVG RECKONS

In a league of its own. No other extreme title comes close to conjuring up the kind of wildly original and stunning gameplay that TH3 provides. Buy it. **Mike**

10

If you like this try these...
Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder (PS2)

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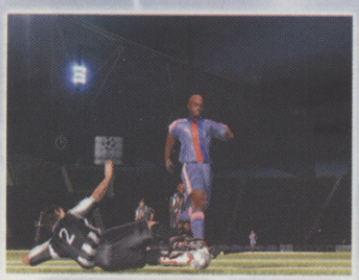

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COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **DMA**
PUBLISHER: **TAKE 2**

Grand Theft

Murder? Gangsters? We're appalled. Honest

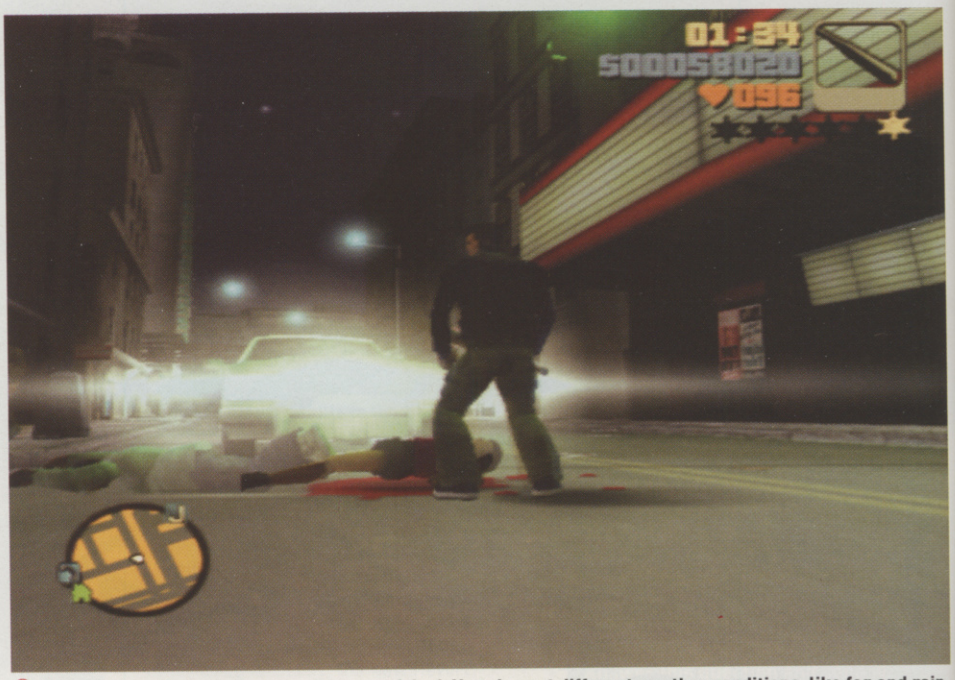
There are some rules in life that playing Grand Theft Auto III will force you to reassess. Crime doesn't pay? Oh yes it does. We just battered some passer-by with a baseball bat, they went down in a crumpled heap, and loads of dollar pick-ups appeared. It was sweet. What goes around comes around? Horse dung. So far we've got the blood of at least 50 innocents on our hands and we've barely a scratch in return.

Grand Theft Auto is back, and playing it you'll feel like it's never been away. Violent, controversial, immoral and tons of fun. And this time everything is in glorious 3D.

THE CITY NEVER SLEEPS

From the trashy '70s TV cop show opening credits, the scene is set. You are a low-life gangster in a city straight out of every US cop show you've ever seen. And this city is alive with pimps cussing their street girls, punks mugging suits for a few dollars, and gang members strutting as they patrol their turf.

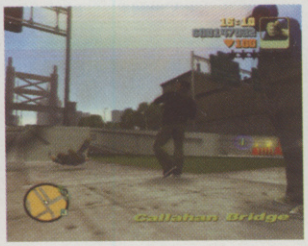
And it's there for you to explore on foot and by car to your heart's content. Bump into people and they'll shout at you. Day turns to night in front of your very eyes and on the roads taxis search for business while police cars, ambulances and fire engines rush to scenes of disaster. Go anywhere, do anything – that's the story



The lighting effects during the night are wicked. You also get different weather conditions, like fog and rain

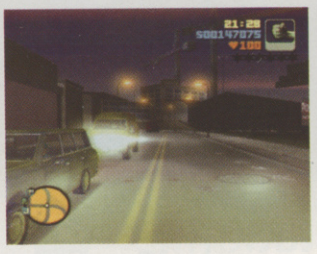
All these shots are from the in-game visuals, showing what a top job they've done on the way

Looks like our kind of place



The map in the bottom-left is all you get to help you navigate

The streets are empty at night



That blue patch is where you get jobs from the crime bosses

behind GTAIII. And for a good few hours you'll find yourself simply rushing round the place causing havoc with a manic grin on your face, like a pig just set loose in a large yard full of steaming crap.

CRUEL AND THE GANG

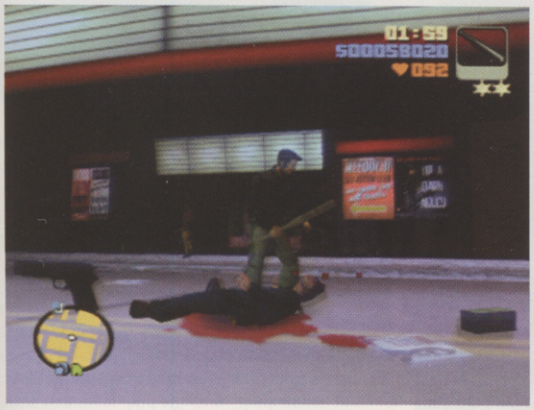
Your goal is to rise to the top of the criminal pile, and to do this you'll need to get yourself in with some of Liberty City's crime bosses.

Each time you visit one of the gang's HQs, they'll give you a mission. From humble beginnings of escorting mafia molls and planting bombs in rival gang leaders' cars, you'll end up grenading Triad vans, tailing suspected snitches and roasting hordes of enemy hoods with a flame-thrower. Fail a mission and you just need to go back to the HQ to start it again. Die and you lose some cash and start back at the hospital. Get busted by the cops and you lose your weapons, get a fine and are placed at the nearest police station. It's impossible to actually 'lose'.

But when running errands for the gangs, it's hard to keep your mind on the job. There are loads of distractions. You're ferrying some gangster's woman over to a nightclub. You turn down an alley for a

Auto III

Things can get vicious out on the streets of Liberty City. It's no place for the faint-hearted, that's for sure



Nick a fire engine, stick the siren on and answer distress calls from around the city. The fun never ends in GTAIII!

shortcut. That transit van looks interesting. You get in to check it out and suddenly one of the many mini-games is triggered. You've got three minutes and an unlimited supply of radio-controlled cars loaded with TNT to destroy as many mafia limos as you can. It seems like down every side street and back alley there's something new.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

GTAIII is bound to kick up a fuss in the papers, just like its predecessors did. You can batter women with baseball bats, mow down pedestrians, and machine-gun passing traffic, even though none of the above are likely to aid your progress.

And even when you're trying not to be bad, innocent people seem to die. You cut a corner just as a granny turns it, mashing her under your wheels. A three-point turn after going up a dead end results in four pedestrians losing their lives. And when it hots up with the law on your tail, poor Joe Public really takes a hammering. Mad car chases through crowded streets inevitably leave scores of bloody heaps in your wake.

You can play GTAIII for hours and still find new surprises. You can hijack fire-engines and then go round putting out fires. You can run fares in stolen taxis for some extra cash. There are shops to buy guns, shops to buy bombs, shops to re-spray your cars and car compactors to destroy incriminating vehicles. You'll be amazed they've crammed it all in. Of course there are niggles – the map is not as useful as it should have been, the police can get too easy to provoke and you can't actually go inside most of the buildings. But in the face of such a criminal masterpiece, these are but minor felonies that we'll let go with a caution.

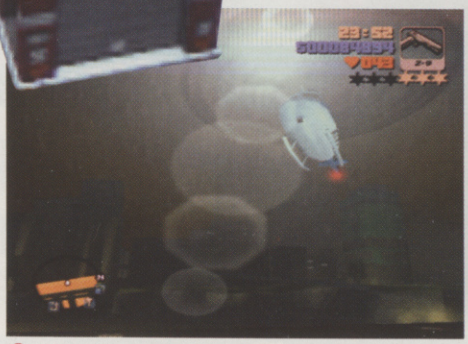
STOP IN THE NAME OF THE LAW!

You'll spend most of your time avoiding, fighting or legging it from the cops. As soon as they see you up to no good, your wanted rating will go up and the cops will be on you like flies on doggy-doo. Learning how to shake cops and reduce your wanted rating is the bread and butter of your time in Liberty City.

If the cops spot you committing one of your many crimes, it's time to shake 'em

Tokens reduce your wanted level

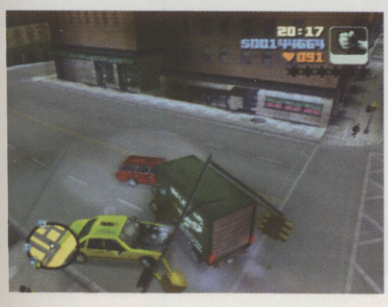
But if the law gets to you, it's hello jail



Annoy the law too much and they'll send choppers

Tool yourself up in Saint Mark's gunshop

You can even switch to GTAI top-down views



CVG FACT

The dudes at DMA are very naughty. Pick up a tart, find a dark street, your car rocks, your health goes up and you lose cash. Tsk.

CVG RECKONS

Crazy Taxi meets Driver meets Syphon Filter in a dark alley. Brilliantly brutal. Steve O

9

If you like this try these...
Crazy Taxi (DC), Driver 2 (PSone)

Devil May Cry

They said the Apocalypse was nigh, and here it is. Bring it on!

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **DEC 14**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**
PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**

In the old days of 2D, videogames were about action and skills. Lots of action and skills. 3D came along, and game-makers started thinking like film-makers. The likes of Res Evil slowed the pace, substituting action with a cinematic sense of brooding drama. Videogames were growing up, but forgetting what Pong and Space Invaders ruled they should all be about.

Then came Devil May Cry – gorgeously cinematic, but packed with ferocious videogame action that requires staggering joypad prowess. You explore vast settings, but mostly you mash a bloody trail through legions of evil creatures and menacing boss characters. Pistols, rocket-launchers, swords, demon-power gauntlets, shotguns: all going bang, crunch and swoosh as your nerves jangle with excitement. Ladies and gentlemen, the videogame is back in the building.

RESIDENT WHAT?

Forget what you've heard – Devil May Cry is nothing like Resident Evil. The two games share fixed camera angles, but that's the only similarity. Jill Valentine and co clumsily bash off walls and struggle to put down one zombie at a time. Devil May Cry's Dante has the agility of an Olympic gymnast, rolling and somersaulting, and he tracks multiple prey with his 12-bore. Room full of enemies? Shotgun out, blast, tumble, blast, tumble. Bodies hit the floor and spent shells go flying. Exhilarating!

The plot is simple: Dante, the demon-hunter who looks like a rock star, is a difficult man to tempt on an assignment. Mysterious babe Trish turns up and tries to kill him in his office to test his skills, and they agree to halt the Satan comeback tour before it even gets to play its first date.

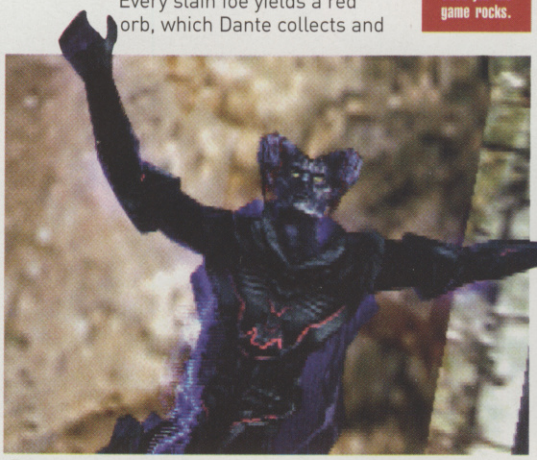
Razor-fisted marionettes. A tad harder than Pinocchio.

Our hero is part-demon, and he uses this power to attack. Shotgun blasts get a coat of blue electricity, and Dante moves even more quickly. Develop his demon side, and Dante can transform into a flying black demon that twists in the air like a death-dealing hurricane. Vicious.

Every slain foe yields a red orb, which Dante collects and spends in between each of the game's 23 missions to grow his demonic powers and unlock doors. The structure doesn't interfere with the narrative, which is carried primarily through the real-time action and cutscenes. Typically Dante will end a section at a door, take a breather, and start the next on the other side.

CVG FACT

Sorry kids, but Devil May Cry suffers from black borders. Good job the game rocks.



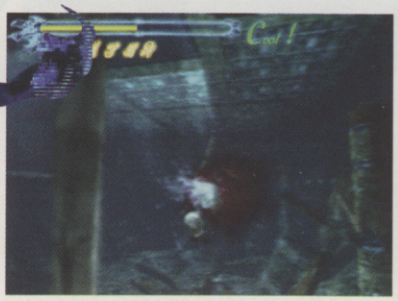
The Dark Knight shows off some breakdancing moves

Dante shows Griffon his rocket-launcher

FAST-FORWARD

The first half of the game takes place in a gothic castle. Dante must explore, and a few puzzles unlock doors. Typical low-level adventure stuff, really: cross level, slay big foe, get key, return to locked door. None of the puzzles are very taxing, which fits in with the fast-forward pace of the gameplay. Besides, there are so many enemies to kill, thinking would be a distraction.

Bonus marks are awarded for killing in inventive ways. A straight rocket-launcher



When Dante swims, it's first-person view

He may look like a refugee from the 1980s, but Dante is double, double-hard

Look at the size of that thing! Okay, awe over. Now kick its feathery ass

When baddies get hit, they bleed nicely

blast will get you labelled as dull, but hacking a foe into the air, then juggling his body with twin handgun fire is considered cool. 'Cool' is the optimum word here. The hyper-violent Devil May Cry is one of the most stylish videogames ever created.

Scythe-fisted marionettes, scissors-toting witches, razor-clawed lizards, giant napalm-spitting spiders: there's a lot of evil to slay. Boss characters are cracking, and have a nasty habit of returning to haunt you after you think they're dead. A laser-firing giant griffin gives you hell in the castle courtyard where there's plenty of room to manoeuvre, but also returns when you're on the object-strewn deck of a phantom pirate ship. You have to leap up the mast and around the deck to survive.

It's at this point that Devil May Cry's big flaw becomes evident. The cinematic camera work is great but makes dodging around tricky with the view shifting. Some will also take exception at the constant combat, but for us that's the game's strength. Twenty-three levels don't sound much, but you're looking at a good ten hours' play on the easiest setting. On the top difficulty setting, even the feeblest baddies become near invincible. It's a fearsome challenge. Resident Evil has left for GameCube, and all PS2 owners get in return is this. Lucky them.

CVG RECKONS

Enjoy a killing rampage, no brain required. A visceral videogame feast. **Dean**

9

If you like this try these...
Onimusha Warlords (PS2)

Dante on the move, blasting his way across the ramparts on top of the castle. In his way? Then it's death for you. An extremely painful death involving swords, rockets, and demon-powered gauntlets

1

A DAY IN THE AFTERLIFE

Each of the game's missions mixes killing, adventuring, puzzling and a lot more killing. Your reward for solving a moderately difficult puzzle is usually the appearance of a boss character that wants to annihilate you. Call us wimps, but we'd prefer a pat on the back. Good job there's usually only a single puzzle on each mission, and the rest of the time is spent hacking evil demons up into bite-size chunks and blasting the bits to atoms with a shotgun. Boom!

"The orb goes in there, I think"

2

"Bring it on, bitch!" The knight slashes with his blade, and Dante gives him heavy artillery

3

"What the...? Who the hell's that up there? Oh, it's you, Mr Dark Knight. It's a fight you want, is it?"

IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE...?

The first few minutes of the opening Marine mission are among gaming's scariest ever. Not because of the things you see, but because of the things you hear but *don't* see. The terror is purely psychological, built up by memories of the movies. Tension builds as you stumble across atrocities while trying to enter a base. All the signs are there but where the hell are the Aliens and Predators? When your motion tracker finally kicks in, you blindly pump a zillion rounds into the shadows, just like in the movies.

You hear a Predator, somewhere. And then the bridge blows up. Run!

Where the hell did he fall from? This isn't looking good at all...

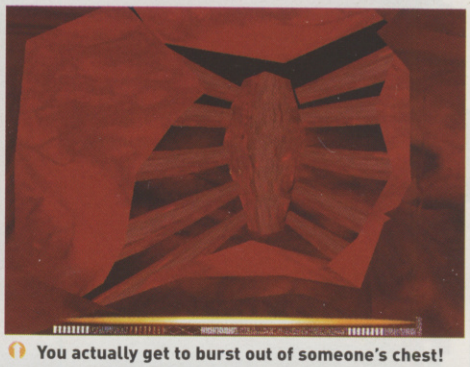
This flaming vehicle rockets right past you and explodes...

Ping... ping... ping... Aargh! Fire! Just one thing. Where are they?

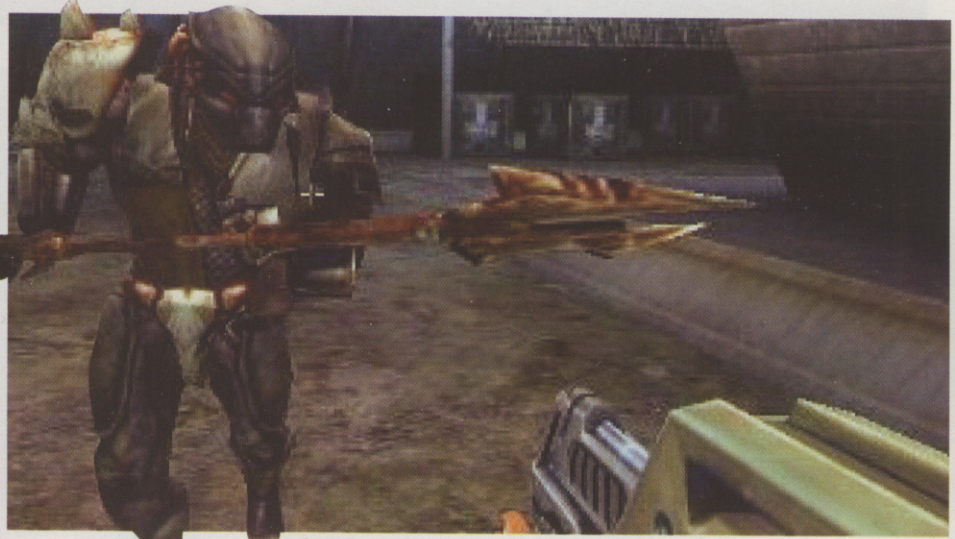
Aliens Vs Predator 2

This killer shooter goes for the jugular

Some men have to pay for this kinda thing, y'know



You actually get to burst out of someone's chest!



Now that's a pretty mean-looking chopper. Yikes!

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **DECEMBER**
PLAYERS: **1-16**
DEVELOPER: **MONOLITH**
PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI**

Strap a man-sized Huggy on to your arse, it's fright time. In fact, AvP2 isn't just a frightening first-person shooter, ooooh no. This'll have you rocking, dribbling huge globules of drool and muttering insanely to yourself about invisible beasts and brain-eating killers that walk on walls. If you don't do that already, of course.

Indeed, AvP2 is so brilliant, and messes with your mind so much, that an hour of play will reduce you to a paranoid weirdo, unable to even go shopping without jumping at footsteps behind you, barking, "Die alien scum!" before realising that innocent-looking toddler presents no immediate threat.

This isn't just another shooter – it's the single most scary, intriguing and down-right entertaining way to give yourself a coronary in the history of computer gaming. And that's just for starters.

SAME STORY, DIFFERENT VIEW

AvP2 is based around one plot which can be played from three perspectives: either as a Marine, Alien or Predator. The first of these is the closest you'll get to a standard shooter. In typical Aliens style, you're sent in to investigate a loss of communications with a deep space colony.

The action is superbly paced, ranging from manic retreats to safety while emptying every available bullet into endless droves of aliens, to cat and mouse tactics when taking on predators who want to skin you alive, hang you upside down and cleave off your skull. Nice...

'This tattoo sucks. Must've been drunk'

"Will you marry me?" "No, but I will kill you." "Oh. Urgh!"

Say "ahhh!" Yup, you're missing those hard-to-reach back teeth, I'm afraid

The Predator missions rely much more on stealth and careful planning, and much like the Arnie/Glover movies, your initial aim is just to kill as many of the other species as you can without being spotted. But as the plot unravels you'll find yourself doing a lot more than trophy hunting. Both the Predator and the Marine have a superb array of weaponry with which to blast the crap out of the enemy, including pulse rifles and spear guns, all with authentic sound effects taken straight from the films.

HUG-GY ME, BABY

While the Alien campaign is the most limited of the three, you play as a range of different aliens, including a face-hugger and the chest-burster. In one mission you actually have to find a victim to impregnate, then in the next find your way out of someone's guts to hunt for food, to later evolve into a full-blown alien. You can even play the entire lifecycle of an alien in the multiplayer too, feasting on your mates' corpses to evolve.

Atmospheric sound, fiendishly smart AI and cool strobe lighting effects are all some of the best we've seen, but the biggest bonus is you get three games in one, as well as the brilliant multiplayer deathmatches. Play as any of the three species, either teaming up or fighting against each other, and you'll soon see why AvP2 rules over other PC blasters.

CVG FACT

Alien 3 was originally supposed to be set on a giant floating wooden monastery in space. Yes, it's novel, but would it have saved the movie from being weak? We think not.

CVG RECKONS

You'll cry hysterically with fear, you'll weep with joy. This is quite possibly the finest first-person shooter ever. Martin K

9

If you like this try these...
Half-Life: Generations (PC)

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Virtua Tennis 2

Get your mates round and make a racquet

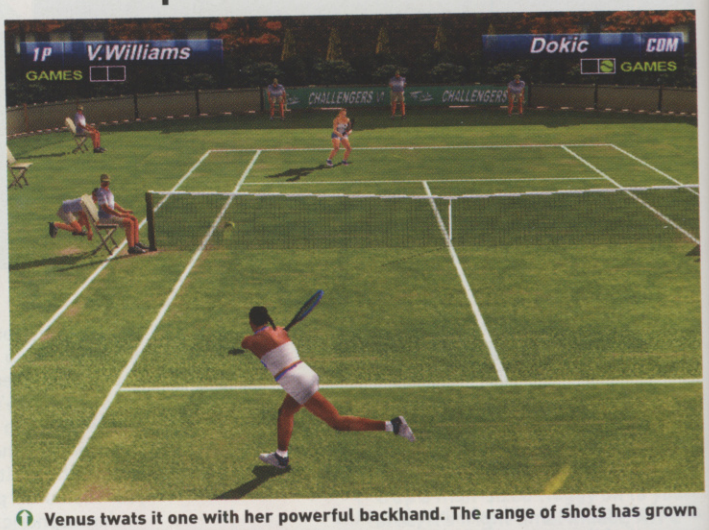
AROUND THE WORLD

The brilliant World Circuit mode has been revamped for the sequel. You create a player and set about winning matches and working your way up the world rankings to the number one spot. You have to earn cash to hire doubles partners and open new arenas and opponents. But best of all are the often bizarre training mini-games that force you to practise individual skills.

"How can I practise when someone's left this mess here?"

Yo Sushi! enters a new market

Hone your baseline game



Venus twats it one with her powerful backhand. The range of shots has grown

The Williams sisters get it on with some mixed doubles

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOVEMBER 23**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **SEGA HITMAKER**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**

Ah, Virtua Tennis. Last year we got totally addicted to the arcade smash, and when the Dreamcast version arrived we had to change out of our tennis whites for fear of dirtying them. It was everything we hoped for and more, adding new modes and recapturing the magic of the coin-op.

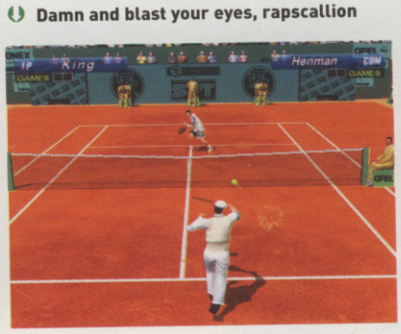
A year on and we're faced with the sequel. We only had a few minor gripes with the original – no female players was the obvious omission – but we also had a few hair-pulling moments caused by the inability to make some diving shots. The best news is that Sega has addressed both these areas in Virtua Tennis 2, adding real female stars including Venus and Serena Williams and tweaking the on-court action until it purrs like the finely-tuned engine that powers Michael Schumacher's Ferrari.

ANYONE FOR TENNIS?

The Williams sisters aside, Pat Rafter, Monica Seles and 'Tiger' Tim Henman are among the 20 licensed tennis stars who turn-up for work when the game loads, looking more life-like and far better animated than last year. Each player has different strengths, from net play to service power, allowing you to pick a star that suits your style.

When serving, the controls are far more sensitive and shots require greater precision than in the first game. Get a rally going and you'll soon realise the computer players have improved intelligence and are more capable opponents than before. And despite boasting the same simple control system, there's a greater variety to the shots you can perform, especially when returning serves. We're happy to note that following our gripes about diving shots, these have been greatly improved, too.

But the first game was nigh on perfect and only needed the odd tweak. So this may not be worth your money if you already have VT1.



Damn and blast your eyes, rapscallion

CVG FACT

It's rumoured Sega wanted lovely Anna Kournikova to appear in the game, but a fee couldn't be agreed. Our loss.

CVG RECKONS

Sega serves up another ace. A worthy sequel.
Alex H

8

If you like this try these...
Pro Evolution Soccer (PS2)

OWN IT ON VIDEO AND DVD VIDEO

FROM 3RD DECEMBER

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COST: **£44.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **CRYSTAL DYNAMICS**
PUBLISHER: **EIDOS**

Soul

Console games generally aren't big on epic plotting. With a few notable exceptions, games tend to put character A in scenario B, leaving you to puzzle, shoot and fight your way to a foregone conclusion. Even the awesome Legend Of Zelda games have simple, shallow plots.

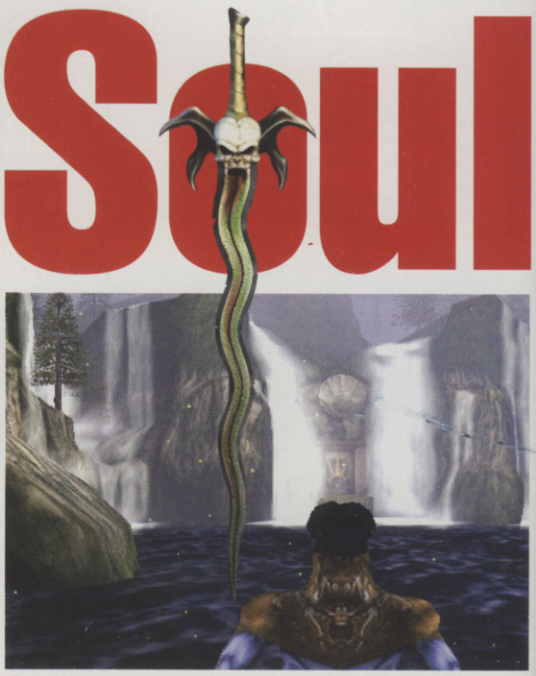
Soul Reaver 2, on the other hand, is a thick porridge of characters; rich with historical detail. The quest covers everything from double-double crosses and time-travel to lead character Raziel's quest to discover his true identity.

ABLE BUT UNSTABLE

Soul Reaver 2 is like the latest episode in the Legacy Of Kain soap opera and you

Nice rustic

mas



Stunning views await those who escape the catacombs

Raziel lost his jaw in the Abyss so he wears a fetching scarf

hide the

Raz overcame his vampire's aversion to water in the first game so no probs there

The Reaver makes pretty arcs in the air and deals sweet death to all it touches

You get to kill cool little ghoul men in the Spectral realm

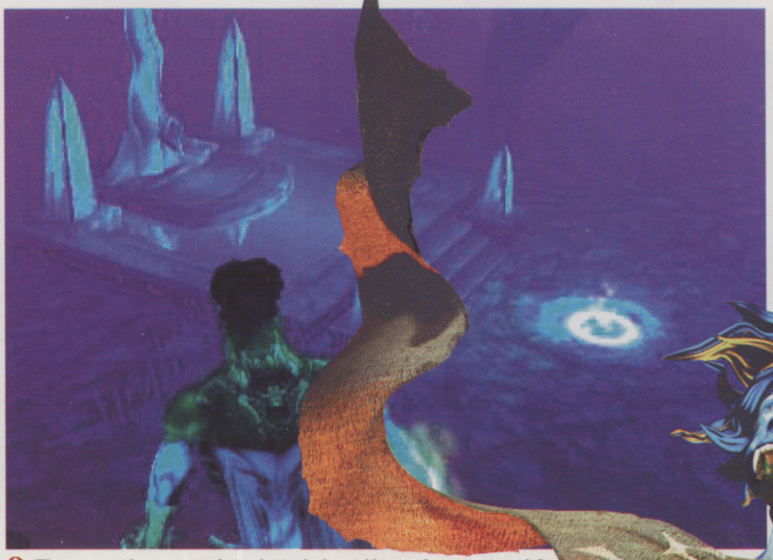
Even the chicks are undead

DEATH IS USEFUL

Raziel was once in league with Kain but was cast out of the vampire circle for being the first of his kind to sprout wings. Kain banished Raz to the Abyss where his body was wrecked and that's how he came to look as he does now. It's this betrayal that fuels Raziel in his ongoing quest to find out his true purpose in the grand scheme of Nosgoth. But being dead isn't all bad. Here's why.

Raz can shift to Spectral any time, but to get back he needs a full health bar and a portal

masonry and even nicer blood splatters up the walls



These are the save points dotted about Nosgoth – pretty, eh?

Reaver 2

You better believe Raziel was born to reave

start off with the dazzling array of abilities acquired during Soul Reaver 1. To help him solve the action-based puzzles he can grab, rotate, shunt and slide puzzle objects and blocks. He can scale walls and use his wings to glide across yawning chasms. His combat skills are equally extensive and he can hack, slash, slice, impale, block, duck and even steal his foes' weapons with ease.

HOLY SHIFT!

Raziel's two most useful assets are his ability to shift between dimensions at will and his symbiotic weapon, the Soul Reaver. Being dead already, Raziel can explore both the 'real' or Material world, along with the Spectral plane. The clever thing is that when you shift from the Material to the Spectral, the environment changes and warps around you. Not only does this look pretty, it's essential to progress as new platforms are revealed and previously impassable portals open.

The Soul Reaver sword plays a major part in the story, being the most powerful weapon there is. But using it comes at a price and if you dispatch too many enemies with it, it becomes over-aroused and will suck masses of energy from you to sate its hunger. As you trek through Nosgoth's different eras you'll tackle a bunch of elemental shrines. By solving the mind-shredding puzzles within, you can imbue the Reaver with new skills, giving Raziel yet more abilities, and bringing you closer to the true meaning of what it means to wield the living blade.

LET'S GET METAPHYSICAL

SR2 offers a compelling mix of hardcore puzzles and involving fights set in a vast and fantastically gothic world. The story is overblown and the voice actors really go for it, spouting reams of philosophical nonsense, but set within the epic location of Nosgoth it all works perfectly.

The massive quest and believable, consistently entertaining game-world are the perfect antidote to the slew of PS2 racers, fighters and extreme sports games. It's tough, and there's a bit too much backtracking to be done, but Soul Reaver 2 is one of the best action-adventures on the PS2 .

hide the horror

CVG FACT

Clever level design means you never have to wait for new sections to load in SR2

Massive environments and precious little fogging – sweet

CVG RECKONS

With its compelling gameplay and superb gothic atmosphere SR2 is one of the most polished and complete adventures we've seen all year. **Lee**

8

If you like this try these...
Soul Reaver (DC/PSone), Shadowman (N64)

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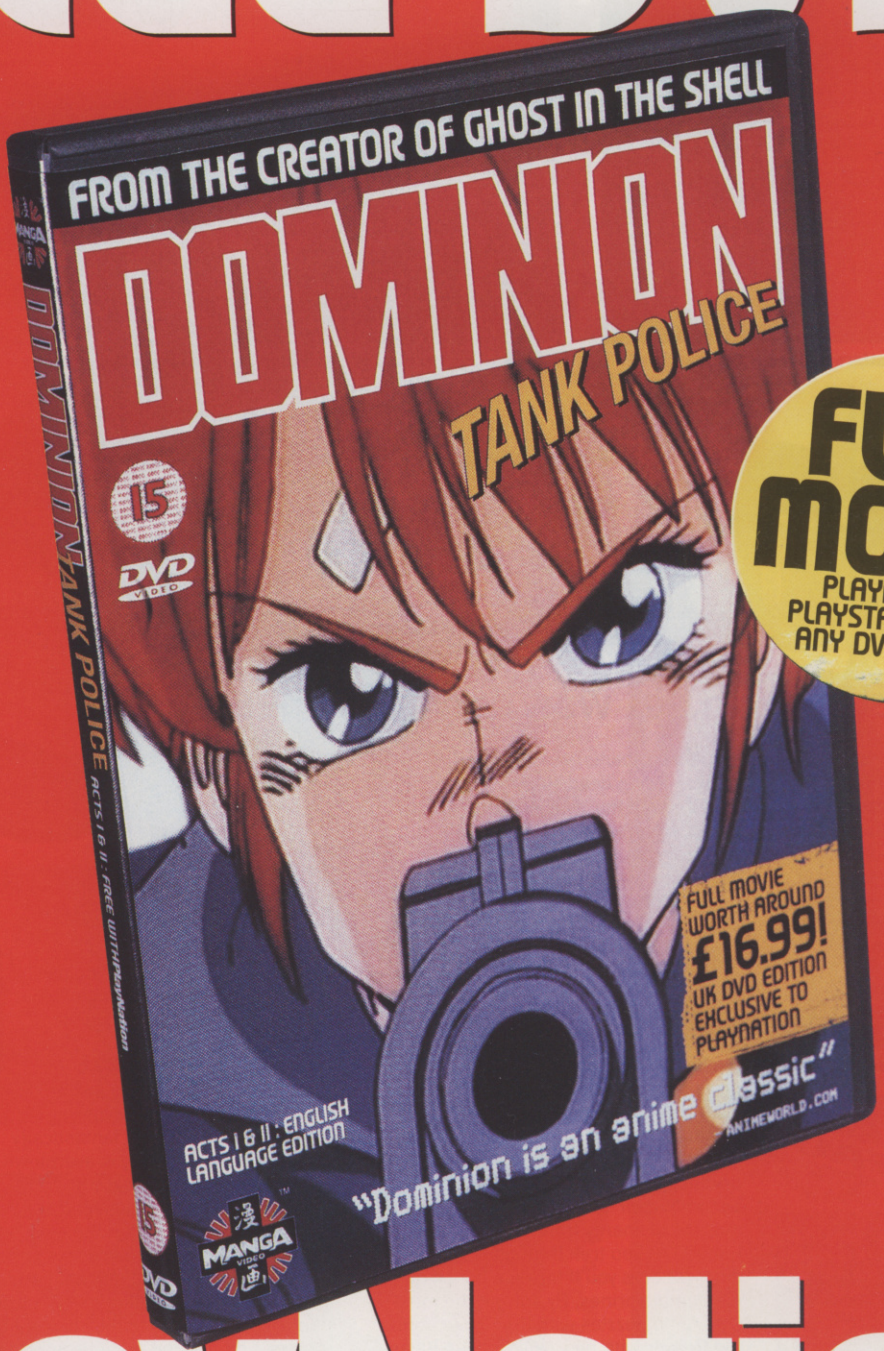

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COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **HOODOO STUDIO**
PUBLISHER: **CODEMASTERS**

The Blues vs Wolves. Civil war in the West Midlands

Getting things done is as easy as it gets

LMA Manager 2002

Sheepskin coats at the ready

The original LMA Manager managed to pull off what previously had been considered an impossible feat. It made footie management accessible to those of us who aren't utter anoraks about stats and figures. Using slick TV-style presentation held loads more appeal than screen after screen of numbers and lists and made the job seem as glamorous as it really is. We all said goodbye to the tedious number crunching that went before.

Improvements? Well obviously everyone is playing for the right team, but we kind of expected that. More importantly, the whole gameplay system has been made faster so it flows smoother now and the time from decision-making to getting your boys out there doing the job is significantly reduced. And while they are doing the job (making a bad start to the season if you're Man Utd or bottling out of away matches in politically volatile countries if you're Chelsea), you'll notice the improved AI of players on the pitch. It's the closest we've seen to players acting like they should outside of proper footie games such as FIFA or CVG favourite ISS.

LMA retains the stylish presentation and tightens up the loose ends left by the first game – not that there were many. Retains its 'Best On PSone' title.

The action looks better than other sims

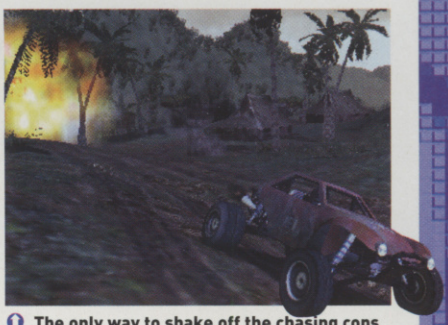
CVG RECKONS

Footie management fun that's not just for sad statistic freaks. It's likely to be the genre's swansong on PSone, but at least this final effort takes the Championship with ease. **Les**

If you like this try these...
Championship Manager 2001/2002 (PC)

Smuggler's Run 2 Hostile Territory

A right smug git of a game? Yup, and tough too



The only way to shake off the chasing cops

The terrain may look the same but it's not set in Afghanistan

Be wary of mines in towns

Will they bomb the bridge?

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **ANGEL**
PUBLISHER: **ROCKSTAR**

There you are, driving over terrain with more bumps and curves than Pamela Anderson, when the local law enforcement send off-road vehicles to bring you in. If you want to succeed in taking the contraband to your objective you'll have to be a bit handy, smashing the law into trees or rocks. And with this much carnage going on, if you do see a flat bit of road, you can bet your asphalt it's mined to hell or overhead bombers are keeping a close eye on it.

Unlike the original where they hoped the dust thrown up by your crazy off-road antics would cover up any lack of variety in the gameplay, SR2 features modes incorporating point-to-point racing, contraband delivery and turf wars with other gangs. There are even some mini games to keep the one-player experience alive. Multiplayer also gets a serious beefing up with versions of these new modes and mini-games like Tag.

The design of the vehicles and great terrain effects make driving mad in the head, but fun with it. It may not be an accurate off-road racer, but that doesn't matter when you're focussed on carnage and missions rather than just pure racing. So it looks better, sounds better, plays better and feels better than the original. 'Nuff said.

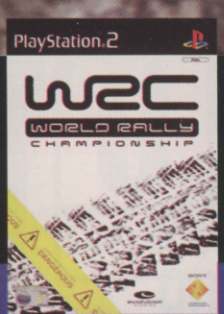
CVG RECKONS

Off-road and off its head. Driving mixed with utter carnage makes for plenty of thrills and spills. **Les**

If you like this try these...
ATV Off-Road (PS2)

World Rally Championship

From the 4,000 corners of the earth



14 countries. Hundreds of miles. Thousands of different corners.

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Half-Life

Millions of PC owners can't be wrong

Take the fight to the alien homeworld

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOV 30**
PLAYERS: **2**
DEVELOPER: **GEARBOX**
PUBLISHER: **SIERRA**

Nearly three years ago the world of PC first-person shooters was blown apart by the release of Half-Life. Not only did it feature blistering action and tons of wicked weapons to ventilate your foes with, it had a plot that unravelled in front of your very eyes, creating the most cinematic shooter ever seen.

With the plug pulled on a Dreamcast version earlier this year, it's PS2 owners who have the honour of being the first console gamers to experience Half-Life. You are Gordon Freeman. You have a PhD in Theoretical Physics and work in the anomalous materials section of the top secret underground Black Mesa research facility. Before you reach for dictionaries, don't worry – you can let your guns do the talking soon enough.

LET THE SLAUGHTER BEGIN

The game starts with you arriving for work on the day of a big experiment. You rush around getting your stuff together and finding the test room. Then all hell breaks loose. The experiment backfires and a

The boss battles can be tough and often the best way to win relies on brains more than brawn

The complex is in ruins and bodies lie everywhere. Touch those energy beams and feel the pain!

Talk to people – they might be able to help you

REALITY CHECK

Half-Life effortlessly stands head and shoulders above other shooters in the way it brings your surroundings to life. The Black Mesa research facility has just been wrecked and you stagger out of the testing chamber to find carnage everywhere you turn.

Disorientated survivors desperately try to resuscitate their stricken colleagues, as fires burn out of control around them. The tannoy blurts out announcements while guards fight for their lives against the swarming hordes of aliens, and broken power lines leak deadly bolts of electricity. And it all plays out in front of your very eyes – we're not talking cutscenes here.

portal to a distant galaxy is somehow opened, and through it pour legions of bloodthirsty alien beasts to lay waste to the entire facility. There you are, unarmed, stuck a mile below the surface. Your colleagues are dead, dying or disorientated. Military teams are on their way from above but they may be more interested in keeping this disaster a secret than rescuing survivors. You're really up against it.

Playing Half-Life shows quite clearly why it is mentioned among PC owners in such awe-filled tones. The way everything happens without any cutscenes or interruption to the gameplay is immense.

There's a sense of relief when you hook up with someone for a while, though they don't tend to last for long

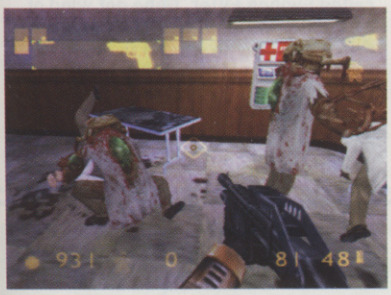
A DECENT ARSENAL, AT LAST

You start unarmed, and you'll be cursing this fact as soon as you meet the first aliens. Pretty soon you get a crowbar, and you'll thank God for it. Alien scum, you may have travelled many light years to be here, but the feel of iron on flesh is a language that needs no translation.

But it's not long before you get your hands on a fallen security guard's pistol, and shotguns, assault rifles, grenades and even deadly alien energy weapons follow.

There's something about the guns in Half-Life. Is it the brutal sound they make as they recoil in your hands? Is it the way spent cartridges pour out as you change magazines? Or is it the secondary fire function many of them have, like the grenade launcher slung under the assault rifle? This is one of the finest collections of weapons ever seen in a shooter.

Things can get quite gruesome



CVG FACT

The developer reckons there's four times as much detail in this version as in the original PC game, and twice as much as the aborted DC effort.

Eat crowbar, dirty alien fiend

MR POPULARITY

There's an equally impressive collection of mutants, aliens and heavily armed Marines, all of which want you dead. From the little things that leap at your face like extremely dangerous puppies, to tentacle-headed lizard things that spew acidic green jelly, these Martians have really sent their most anti-social ambassadors this time.

But it's the hordes of gung-ho Marines that cause the most problems. These guys are serious pros and work in squads. They won't just come piling in like lemmings – they take cover and smoke you out with grenades. Luckily you can often overhear them on their walkie-talkies, alerting you to their presence and also their plans.

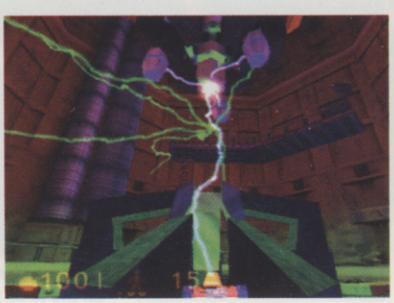
But there's much more here for PS2 owners than just the original Half-Life Story mode, chiefly the brand new PS2-only Decay mode. Unlike the main game, Decay is split into missions that follow the fortunes of two other scientists trapped in the facility when the disaster happens.

Playable either in split-screen co-operative mode or single-player with you switching at will between the two characters, you have to work as a team to defeat groups of opponents and solve puzzles. And as you can't save mid-mission, the tension is particularly high and the frenetic action is a nice contrast to the steady progress in the main single-player game. And what's cool is the way it overlaps with events in the main game, with you actually being responsible for saving Freeman at one point.

Some employees run but some stay behind and try to help

Hook up with a guard or fellow survior and watch as they dish out Earth justice to the alien scum

Gordon's day at work soon goes very wrong



GAME, SET AND DEATHMATCH

On top of this, there is also a two-player deathmatch mode which, while not crammed with options, is a great laugh and completes a well-rounded package.

But at the end of the day, given all the graphical tweaks they claim to have made over the original, if they had constructed it from scratch for PS2 making more use of lighting and texture effects, it surely would have looked better. Just compare it to the visuals in GT3, the Metal Gear 2 demo or Silent Hill and you'll see what we mean. Hopefully it'll all be ironed out in Half-Life 2, which is already underway.

CVG RECKONS

Well worth a look, but not if you prefer your software to be at the cutting edge of gaming. Steve O

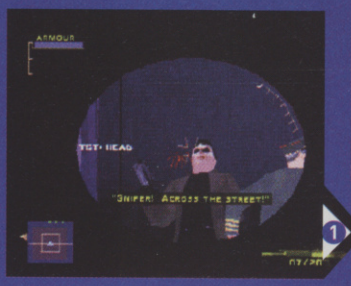
8

If you like this try these...
Red Faction (PS2)

TARGET PRACTICE

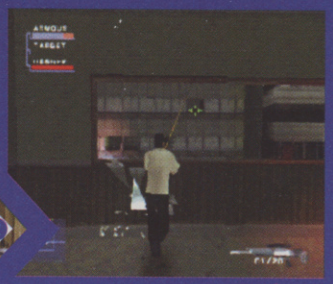
Syphon Filter thrives on fast-flowing action. But it's no dumbed-down shoot 'em up as its fantastically simple-to-use, though its in-depth, targeting system means you can tackle the action your own way. Take it sneaky and use silenced weapons at long range to keep your position hidden, or use auto-targeting to pile in and start kicking ass, gung-ho style.

Hold L1 for manual targeting and the view switches to first-person



R1 lets you auto-target, allowing you to move and fire simultaneously

The danger meter shows how well your enemy can see you



Syphon Filter 3

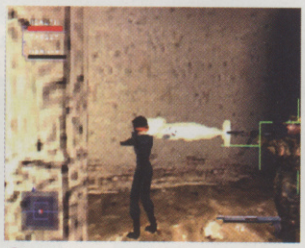
This deadly bacteria is as infectious as ever

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOVEMBER 30**
PLAYERS: **2**
DEVELOPER: **SCEA**
PUBLISHER: **SONY**

The Agency is a covert security organisation so ruthless the CIA seems like Oxfam in comparison. And Gabe Logan is its top agent. Sorry, *was* its top agent. A few months ago, while on the trail of a deadly biological weapon called Syphon Filter, Gabe got wind of corruption within the organisation's top brass. Sensing he was on to them, the bad guys stitched him up like a kipper.

The game opens with a tribunal interrogating Gabe about previous missions, and as each operation is called into question the action kicks in with you

And it's goodnight Lian Xing



AK47 to your head at two paces. That's gotta hurt

Climb like a spider monkey

Shenmue II

Want a holiday to Hong Kong for under £30?

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOVEMBER 30**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **AM2**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**

Shenmue had a lot to offer. It had a wow factor, a compelling story and a degree of freedom that left many eager for more. But at the end of the day it was an opening chapter and it ended just as you felt it was going somewhere. Like all opening chapters it was designed to give you a feel for your surroundings and a chance to get acclimatised. Shenmue II is where things really get going.

PREVIOUSLY IN SHENMUE

This second instalment begins with Ryo Hazuki arriving in Hong Kong, continuing his search for the evil Lan Di to avenge the murder of his father. If you played the original, the first thing you'll notice in this new environment is the increased level of detail – more characters are on screen at once and there's a greater variety in architecture as well as an abundance of finely crafted objects.

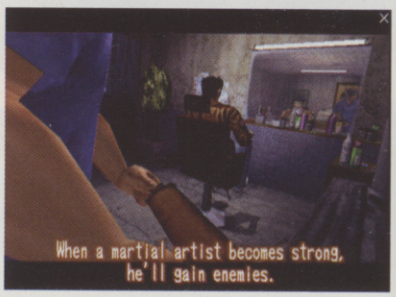
The other immediate difference is that the dialogue is now in Japanese with subtitles running across the bottom of the screen. Don't worry, it adds to the 'being there' feeling that Shenmue is famous for.

This second chapter also feels more like a game. Many people criticised the original for featuring too much aimless wandering about. Pah! Shenmue II doesn't have a dull minute. The Quick Timer Events – rhythm action style sections where you have to copy button sequences to progress through moments of danger – occur more frequently. Only now you get one chance to get it right. Mess up and face the consequences. Miss a certain 'event' and you can choose to skip a day, meaning no dull hanging about waiting for shops to open.

Then there's the fact Ryo is broke and needs to make money fast, resulting in a fine assortment of mini-games that once unlocked you can play outside of the story.

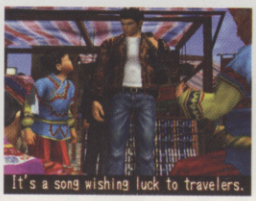
Like the original, Shenmue II really is a work of art with incredible beauty throughout, but it's also far bigger with more to do and will give you an even greater sense of immersion into Ryo's boots than before. In a word – genius!

Upon locating the china shop, Ryo starts going a bit potty



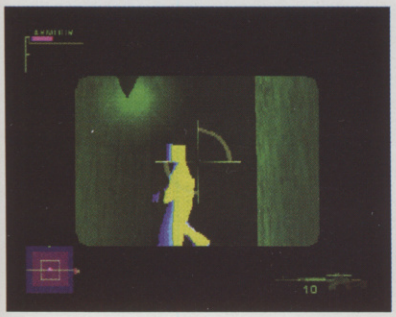
Ryo waits for a shave and a haircut

The detail is incredible



The game of Lucky Hit is all the rage in Hong Kong

Get hold of a Russian sniper rifle and activate the groovy night-vision scope



playing through the past events. From assassinating a Chinese guerrilla general in Tokyo, to parachuting into an illicit South African mining facility, Syphon Filter 3 ditches the more undercover elements of the second game in the series in favour of the high body-count action of the first.

PUMP ACTION

The line-up of weapons is frightening. You'll never have known there were so many different makes of sub-machine gun. How do you like your shotgun, sir? Pump action or automatic? And pistol? 45 calibre or 7mm, silenced or not?

Along with the arsenal, the range of missions is impressive too. And these jobs are never cut and dried – just as you think you're reaching your objective, new orders arrive or the situation blows up in your face as a bunch of new goons jump you. Destroying mine shafts, quickly assisting fellow agents pinned down during the action, or escorting friendlies out of the firing line – to stay alive you have to be on your toes like a ballet dancer.

Also for your cash you get some fairly enjoyable though ultimately limited two-player deathmatch arenas and a bunch of single-player challenge games that are fun for a while.

While graphically it's a little long in the tooth now, look past this and you'll find a game that could show certain next-gen action titles a trick or two.

The game opens with you having to whack this Chinese dude

CVG RECKONS

Like any good filter, SF3 sifts out all the muck and crud so only pure gameplay goodness remains. **Steve O**

8

If you like this try these...
c-12 (PSone)

Hong Kong is a large place. Luckily you can buy maps to help you navigate

CVG RECKONS

Much like the first game, Shenmue II is an unforgettable experience. It's a shame it's only out on a dead console. At least the old boy gets to bow out with style. **Alex H**

9

If you like this try these...
Head Hunter (DC), Virtua Fighter 4 (PS2)

CVG FACT

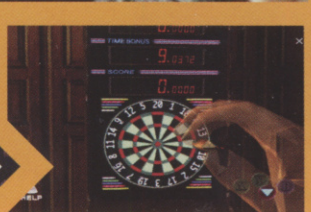
There's nearly triple the amount of speaking in Shenmue II compared to the original. Shame it's all in Japanese.

MO' MONEY

Ryo needs to keep his finances in check. By the end of the first day in Hong Kong he'll be out of pocket and as you have to pay for hotels each night you'll need to find money fast. Luckily, this is a city addicted to gambling, so there are plenty of ways to make a fast buck...

Arm wrestle to earn money, but be careful who you challenge

Out Run – the complete game!

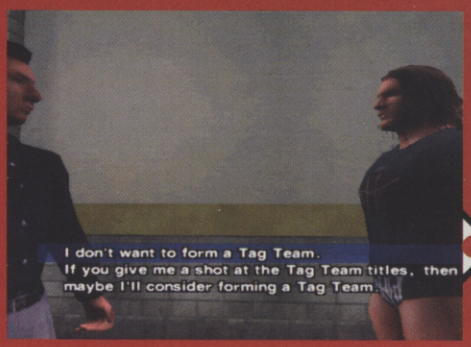


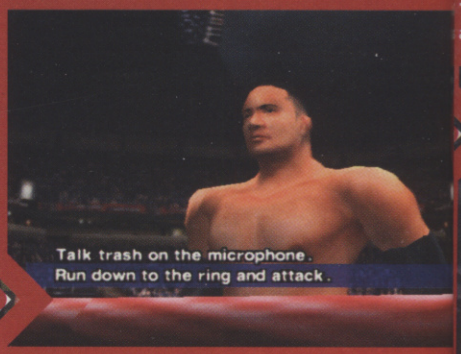
Try your hand at darts

FROM SUPERTART TO SUPERSTAR

The road to WWF glory needs more than just a simple case of constant victories in the ring until you get a shot at the title. You need to deal with all the politics of being nice to WWF boss Vince MacMahon, forging alliances with people you need to help you (or, more importantly, people you don't want to get in your way!) and carrying out tasks set to you outside of the ring. Then, and only then, can you consider yourself on a level with Triple H, Undertaker, Stone Cold Steve Austin and the rest of the boys.

A chance meeting with the boss backstage and your career gets off to a flying start





The Rock is mouthing off in the ring. What you do to retaliate is up to you

WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It

"It's our yard, and our dogs that run this yard"

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **YUKES**
PUBLISHER: **THQ**

Jen smashed Dan's head into a car bonnet. Do we get a shot from The Suits to get back to work? 'Course not, because this *is* work, SmackDown-style, and the four-player is total chaos.

FACT

Before they were famous Tag Team champs, The Hardyz did the motion-capture for the first SmackDown!

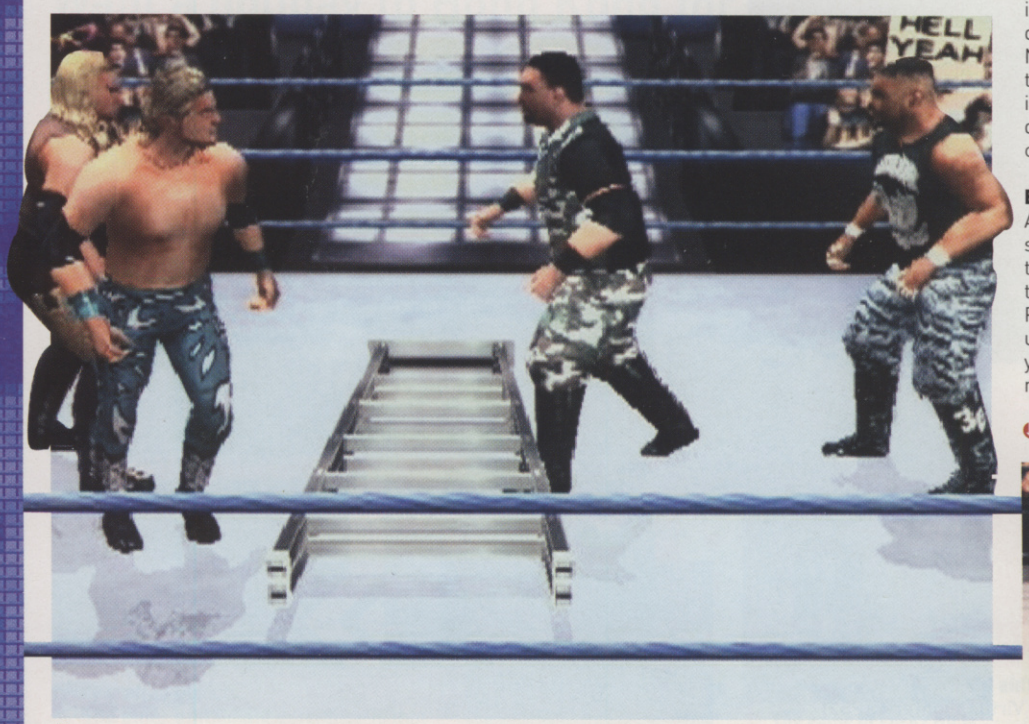
Picture this scene. Les is throwing Lee off the top of a ladder while Alex is slugging Mike in the face with a metal chair. Dan and Jenny would interfere but they're still recovering from their fight in the car park where line-ups to choose from. Tuck into the full career mode if you want depth from your WWF, or check out the Tornado Tag match where six wrestlers duke it out at once. The most chaotic match-up you'll ever see? You betcha.

However, none of the Alliance storylines or indeed those characters are in there (the game would have been delayed for ages if they'd done it). Shame. Nevertheless, there's enough depth here to keep the casual fan happy, and the improved Create-A-Superstar mode gives die-hards enough scope to take their own creations through the ranks of the WWF.

'YES, I'M THAT DAMN GOOD'

In fact you can now have up to nine characters in and around the ring, with four of them controlled by you and your mates. A well as the standard exhibition bout, there are 70-odd other match

Molly's new superhero look isn't included



When Edge, Christian, the Dueleys and a ladder are in the same ring, blood usually flows

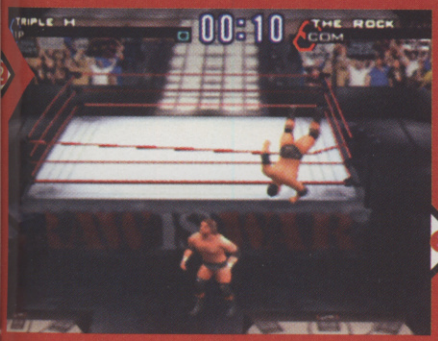
BAD HAIR DAY

A quick glance at these screenshots shows a lot of work has gone into making the wrestlers bigger and more life-like than the last SmackDown! With the PlayStation 2 powering it, these pumped-up pugilists look spookily real... well, until you look at their mullets, which even the mighty PS2 can't handle properly yet!

Rikishi practises origami on The Rock

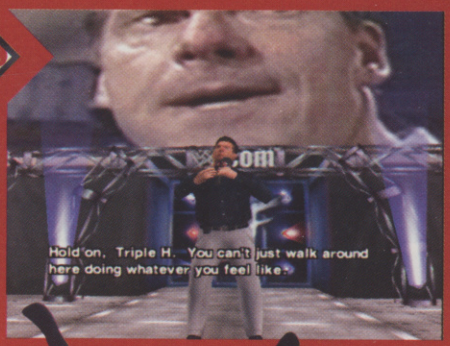
© 2001 Harvey Entertainment, Inc.

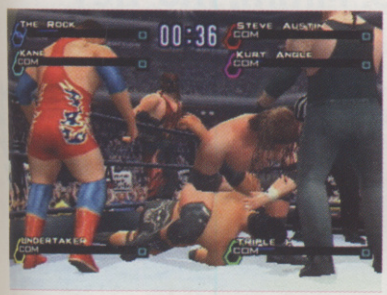
Talk is cheap, it's much better to run in and kick his ass all over the arena



Surely it would be rude not to use weapons if they've been provided, wouldn't it?

The fight is over, but the boss is coming out to have his say, just like on TV





So realistic you can almost smell the testosterone from here

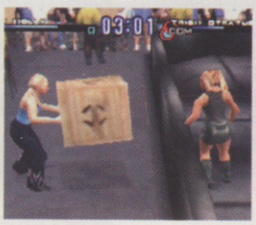
Unfortunately, by the time all the extra detail went into the characters, arenas and weapons, it doesn't look like there was enough time to make the crowd look good. It's not really a problem in the ring, but fight outside and the hyperactive audience looks flat and unconvincing.

Luckily there are a lot of locations to fight in – 16 to be precise, from your bog-standard wrestling rings to the back rooms of the arenas. You get to see them all too, thanks to the one-player story mode where your 'mission' is to explore the arenas to find other wrestlers and then challenge them.

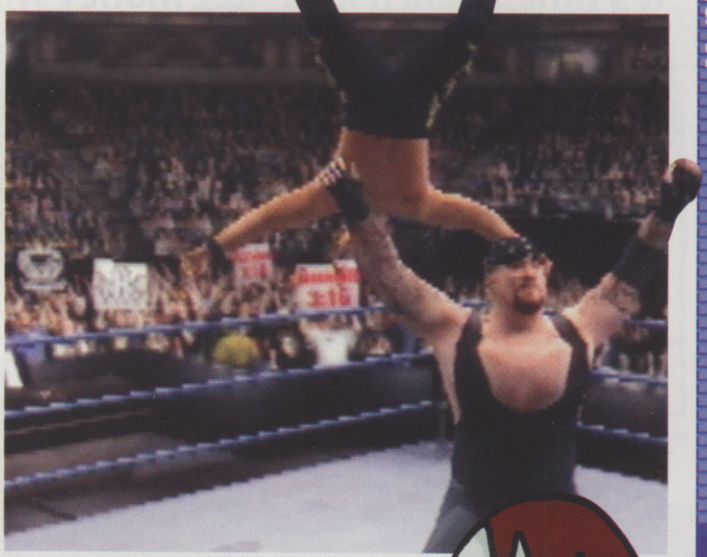
SHADDAP, FOOL!

Other enhancements over SmackDown! 2 include commentary from Michael Cole and Tazz. However, it's not long before you reach for the volume button – it's limited and doesn't really flow well. They don't always name the moves correctly either, which is annoying if you're a WWF fan.

The flat crowd parts as the women go hardcore



Rock takes a break from acting to take on Austin



The Undertaker shows Chris Jericho just why he is known as the big dog that runs his yard

To these die-hard fanatics, SmackDown! Just Bring It almost feels like a stop-gap rather than a full-on sequel – there aren't that many new surprises here. The biggest improvement is in the fights, which flow more smoothly, while the combo system is more fluid than before, so when you pick someone up the next move is already cued up. Very neat indeed. Sure, there's room for improvement, but when you're panning your mate's brains out with a steel chair you really won't care that much.

CVG RECKONS

Fun despite minor flaws, and while most aspects have been enhanced over SD2, there's room for more. Still, a must for grapple fans. **Les**

8

If you like this try these...
UFC (DC), SmackDown! 2 Know Your Role (PS1)

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW CASPER?

www.tdk-mediactive.com

Otto burns up the streets of Springfield

Homer pulls a hard right and clips a van. Doh!

Crazy Taxi didn't have the in-car view

The Simpsons Road Rage

It's time to earn kerr-azy money with The Simpsons. Mmm, mo-ney

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOVEMBER 30**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **RADICAL ENTERTAINMENT**
PUBLISHER: **EA**

Simpsons Wrestling was clearly one of the biggest disappointments to (dis)grace a Sony console, but luckily Road Rage is in a different league to its puke-inducing cousin. Even though it's a total rip-off of Crazy Taxi, the madcap driving action is surprisingly good.

Only an uncoordinated gibbon would find the controls and handling difficult to master, as the game has been tailored for fast 'pick up and put down' play. The main mode, Road Rage, has you bombing through famous areas of Springfield, picking up characters from the cartoon and dropping them off at locations like the Quick-E-Mart and Reverend Lovejoy's church as fast as possible for hard cash. Unlike Crazy Taxi, there's a huge cast of characters to play with, each with a correspondingly crazy vehicle – Otto in his school bus, Willy in his tractor and Flanders in his station wagon. Breaking the taboo of being able to run people over, SSR lets you smack into the citizens of Springfield and send them flying.

It's not rocket science, but whether you're smashing up suburban Springfield as Homer, wrecking Chief Wigam's squad car with Willy's tractor, or cruising in Apu's shiny sportster, this crash fest should entertain and tickle even the sourest of gamers.

CVG RECKONS

The car crunching and mindless mini-cab chaos makes great use of The Simpsons' universe. Mike

7

If you like this, try these...
Crazy Taxi 2 (DC), Burnout (PS2)

SSX Tricky

Long, hard and better than SSX

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **EA**
PUBLISHER: **EA**

The best of the PS2's original launch line-up is ready to wow a whole new band of PS2 owners who missed out before. SSX Tricky is a much reworked and over-hauled version of the first game. But before the words 'cash-in' burble from your lips, you should know that there's more to this excellent 'boarder than just making a quick buck.

Pull an uber trick against a full moon

Eddie's propeller air uber trick is truly sick (inducing)

Not the fastest, but it's swift enough

CAN YOU TRICK IT?
The basic downhill racing gameplay remains unchanged, but there's a whole new focus on tricks in this update. Pull tricks during the races to enhance your boost gauge. Once powered up to the max, you can pull off uber tricks – crazy aerial stunts that earn you serious points and award a boost to help you win the race. It's tough, but once you've cracked it you'll soon be lord of the slopes and, at the same time, totally hooked.

CVG RECKONS

A must if you don't own the original and tempting even if you do. Lee

8

If you like this try these...
Shaun Palmer (PS2), SSX (PS2)

Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder

Slippery, slick, and sick as SSX

COST: **£44.99**
OUT: **NOVEMBER 30**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **DEARSOFT**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

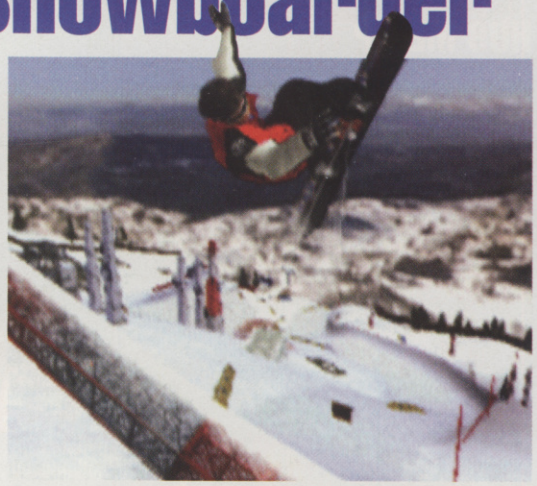
Grizzly, stubbled and wilder than a tomcat on heat, Shaun Palmer bursts onto PS2 and is hell-bent on seizing our attention with his seriously sick skills. And much like the big man's brand of real-life boarding, the fluid freestyle action in SPPS is top drawer.

The controls are easy to pick up, the courses are packed with obstacles, there's a huge variety of stunts and you can string together tricks by pulling off manuals. Sound like a Tony Hawk's game? Well, considering it's another Activision extreme sports title, it's no surprise the developers did take the best aspects of the Tony games and squeezed them in here. It also borrows the basic Pro Skater gameplay structure, seeing you rip through levels with loads of objectives to fulfil. Check the first level, Donner Ski Ranch, for example. You've got to hit massive scores, find a hidden sponsor, nose-press a water tank pipe and get your picture taken four times by hitting specific jumps. Not easy.

Admittedly, you're constantly riding downhill so there's not so much of the exploration vibe you expect to find in a Hawkster game, but this freestyle, objective-based gameplay hasn't been seen in a snowboarding game before, and SPPS proves it works brilliantly. What's more, though the concept isn't original, this makes for an impressive alternative to the full-on race-based action of the SSX series.

Pull a manual and surf across the water

Hit the rails but watch the balance bar


Big air? Launching a satellite, more like

CVG RECKONS

It might be stealing ideas from the Pro Skater series, but SPPS's smooth freestyling still feels fresh and exhilarating. **Mike**

8

If you like this try these...
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 (PS2)

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HUB ME UP

Crash's 25 action stages and five boss fights are all accessed via a central hub. At the end of every stage there's a crystal to collect and as you collect more and more of them, new areas are unlocked. By replaying stages and completing the time trial challenges you get access to secrets areas in the hub too. Check each level's completion status, and the total percentage of game completion by looking at how many gems and icons appear at the entrance to each stage.

Revisit your favourite levels for best times

Check the slots at the level entrance for gems

Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath Of Cortex

See ginger fur fly in this excellently brainless platformer

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **TRAVELLER'S TALES**
PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI UNIVERSAL**

As games mascots go, Crash is rubbish. His stupid orange bulk and slightly boss-eyed, goggle stare would look more at home on a mental patient than on a flagship videogame character. But as pants as he may be as a mascot, Crash is a gaming icon. His adventures have always been crowd-pleasers and his day-glo coloured, wild platforming shenanigans are a real PS2 tonic.

CVG FACT

Wrath Of Cortex is Traveller's Tales first Crash Bandicoot game. Previous developers Naughty Dog have just finished Jak and Daxter.

BUCK THE TREND

Where other PS2 next-gen upgrades of PSone hits are opting for complete overhauls and fancy makeovers, Crash sticks two furry fingers up at that and stays totally true to its on-rails platforming roots. So what you get for your cash is a game bursting with imaginative stages, each of which is totally different from the last.

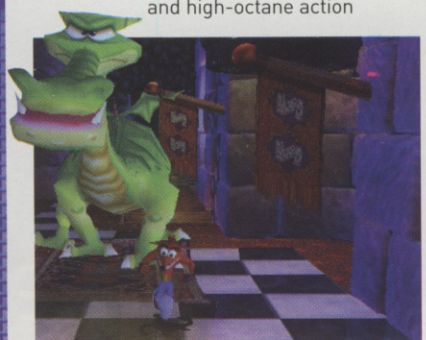
You also get a game that spurns lengthy roaming and exploration and instead throws up awesome set-pieces and high-octane action chases to leave you breathless but gagging for more.

And more is what you get because Crash is a real mutha of a game. Getting to the end of each of the stages is only a fraction of the challenge as to complete them properly each one has to be replayed three or four times. Every level has a crystal to collect, a gem as reward for smashing all the hidden crates, an ankh for scoring the fastest time in Time Trail mode and sometimes an extra gem for locating a super-secret area.

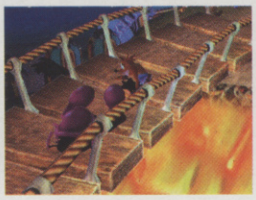
Crash's PS2 debut offers pure gameplay joy and a genuine challenge, even if at the end of the day it doesn't do any more than the PSone versions did.

Take to the skies, ratman!

Master crazy gadgets to avoid the gas of Cortex



Strangely shaped Dragon ahoy



It may be on rails but there's still plenty of danger

You get to control Crash's girlie friend Coco

CVG RECKONS

It's hardly next-gen and you won't score cool points for playing, but Crash's PS2 fun-packed ride barely pauses for breath. Lee

7

If you like this try these...
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Batman Vengeance

Everyone's favourite nocturnal neighbourhood vigilante hits PS2. KER-POW!

He's one seriously batty mofo

The animation is super smooth

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **UBISOFT**
PUBLISHER: **UBISOFT**

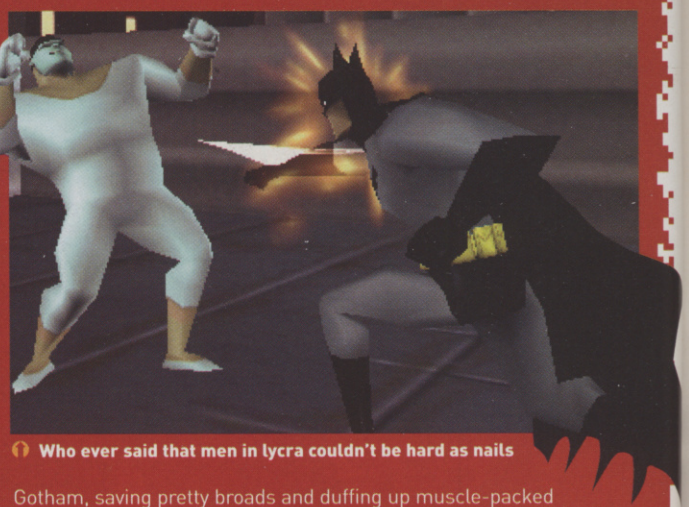
Utmost respect to the Caped Crusader for being the only major superhero without any super powers. Hero or headcase, who cares, he's ultra cool and his PS2 debut proves he's no pushover.

Batman moves with the grace and finesse of his cartoon counterpart, and the controls feel equally smooth. So as you move the villain-bashing vigilante through the striking, minimalist backgrounds, it feels like you're right inside one of the TV episodes.

With more gadgets than James Bond, you leap, swing, and glide your way through 19 levels sorting out the crime wave that's engulfed Gotham, saving pretty broads and duffing up muscle-packed pinheads along the way.

Playing Batman feels very similar to Spider-Man on PSone and DC, so if you're up for some cool 3D hero action, slip into the famous tight black spandex suit and get ready to romp your way through the night.

7



Who ever said that men in lycra couldn't be hard as nails

The first-person antics in MIB have you blasting alien butt with big zappy weapons

Men In Black - The Series: Crashdown

COST: **£24.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **RUNECRAFT**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

A simple 'save the world' plot sits at the centre of MIB's first-person shooting action on PSone, and for a bit of mindless mission-solving and alien-blasting this is worth a look.

MIB sees you shooting your way through 26 stages that have you hunting for items, flicking switches, busting up stuff, solving simple puzzles and zapping evil ETs along the way.

Controls are easy, so getting stuck in isn't a problem. Good fun if a little lightweight for hardened blast freaks.

6

90 Minutes

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
DEVELOPER: **SMILEBIT**
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**

Looks and feels more wooden than The Thunderbirds' disco. No substitute for ISS

The DC may have Virtua Striker 2, but CVG is sure it's not going to be remembered for its footy games, and Sega's latest offering has transformed this opinion into a concrete fact.

Weak is the best word to sum up the experience you'll be faced with if you buy a copy of 90 Minutes. Fact is, there's nothing original or inspiring about the visuals (the players and pitches are very basic) or the simple arcade style action. Yes, there are a bundle of play modes and tweakable options, but with slick games like ISS and FIFA available on other platforms, which to buy is no contest.

4

Supercar Street Challenge

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **EXAKT ENTERTAINMENT**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

Feeling creative? Redesign your car. But what we would have really liked here is a gameplay design mode, so you could inject some character into this.

The main selling point for SSC is its create-a-car feature that sees you messing around with the shape of your vehicle and customising performance. Sadly, the two Championship race modes are completely uninspired and the driving experience is nowhere near the benchmark set by the like of Metropolis Street Racer and GT3. Bah.

4

In almost every department this falls way short of today's leading race games

DNA = Dreary Naff Adventure... Hohoho

DNA

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **HUDSONSOFT**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**

The great idea of making a superhero Manga-style comic book game with cel-shaded graphics and nicely varied puzzle gameplay is sadly lost in DNA amid uninspiring backdrops and sloppy combat.

It has got some great ideas, like the way you collect and combine different items to gain new skills and solve puzzles. But the enemy characters are just a bit rubbish and taking them on with your hero's bombs is too imprecise. It could have been good, instead it's just average.

5

Top Gun

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **TITUS**
PUBLISHER: **VIRGIN**

With no dwarf-like Hollywood star (yes, Mr Cruise, we mean you) to irritate you while you play, Top Gun had the potential of being a kick ass aerial deathmatch bonanza.

Was this potential fulfilled? Well, no. Instead you have a pretty dull shoot 'em up and there's no real sense of speed to the craft you're piloting. Blasting tanks off the face of the earth may be satisfying but air-to-air combat is long-winded, frustrating and fiddly. And though nice extras might make this a good conversion of the arcade game, it isn't good enough.

6

Dull landscapes and dull flying

Capcom Vs SNK 2

COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**
PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**

Visuals lack flair but the action doesn't

Yes it's old school and no it doesn't look as good as Tekken Tag but Capcom Vs SNK 2 is hard-and-fast proof that 2D fighters can still pack a punch with the best of 'em.

The game assembles all the fighters from the two rival fight schools and the clever bit is that you can select your fighting style to match your preferred Capcom or SNK game. These styles, or 'grooves', as they are known, make the action as balanced and honed as anyone could ask for. Essential for all you 2D fight fans.

8

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COST: **£39.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
DEVELOPER: **KALISTO**
PUBLISHER: **WANNADOO**

New York Race

More filth than Fifth Element

Golden rule when making a good racing game: it's got to be fast and rammed with heart-stopping thrills that hook your interest. So New York Race starts out well – mid-air racing with breakneck dives, all the while dodging traffic and skyscrapers across a Fifth Element-style future city.

Maybe it was getting used to racing on vertical as well as horizontal planes, or maybe it was the thrill of spotting shortcuts through buildings. Or maybe it was just the designer logos on buildings. But we'll admit, the first few levels fooled us into expecting something special.

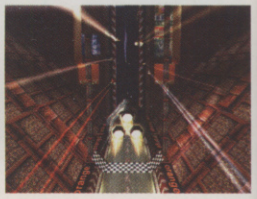
An hour in, though, and you master the controls, only to realise that you have to spend half the races nose-diving to pick up speed and the other half going back up again to stay on track. The novelty of the Fifth Element styling soon wears off and, once you've learnt where the shortcuts are, you won't be too hard pushed to reach them.

In short, it's lacking in the speed and thrills department. In fact, NYR reminded us of a £39.99 bald rocking horse: it gives you plenty of ups and downs, but there are no hairy bits and it's going nowhere not particularly fast.

Guess you didn't see the corner then

Wait for WipEout...

... it's bound to be better



How do you get cabs when they're up here?

CVG RECKONS

Imaginative but lacking in the basic ingredients like speed and excitement. Les

5

If you like this try these...
WipEout (PS1), Extreme G (N64)

COST: **£29.99**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**
DEVELOPER: **IREM**
PUBLISHER: **JVC**

Polaroid Pete

Snap people falling over and get paid for it!

If ever there was a game to silence the Sony haters, who whinge on about a lack of original PS2 software, Polaroid Pete is it. Where else can you take pictures of naked men slipping on bars of soap or phantom hands menacing local folk in misty woods?

Made by Irem, the people behind classic shoot 'em up R-Type, the game is a mad cross between scrolling shooter and Pokemon Snap, with a healthy amount of wickedly weird humour thrown in for good measure.

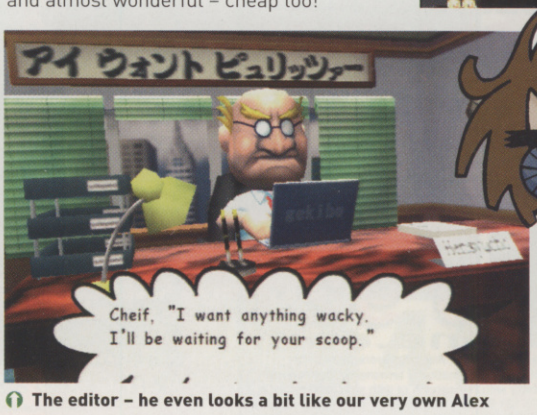
THE MONEY SHOT

Each lengthy stage has one major scoop for Pete to get, like snapping a kidnapped girl on a high-speed train or getting hard photographic proof of the afterlife by snapping a ghost. There are also literally hundreds of other incidents to catch on film too, and you can play for ages and still spot new stuff to snap. Points are rewarded for rare events and you have to avoid or snap the various projectiles hurled at you to stay in the game. It's all pretty mad, but it's also really good fun while it lasts.

And there lies the one and only real problem with the game – it's repetitive and pretty shallow. Luckily there are just enough moments of mad humour and brilliant pop culture references to keep you wanting to see more. Pete is weird and almost wonderful – cheap too!

Pete sneaks on tip-toes

Defend yourself from attacks by snapping the projectiles that fly towards you



The editor – he even looks a bit like our very own Alex

CVG RECKONS

The crazy but slightly repetitive action will please lovers of Japanese madness. But not everyone else. Lee

7

If you like this try these...
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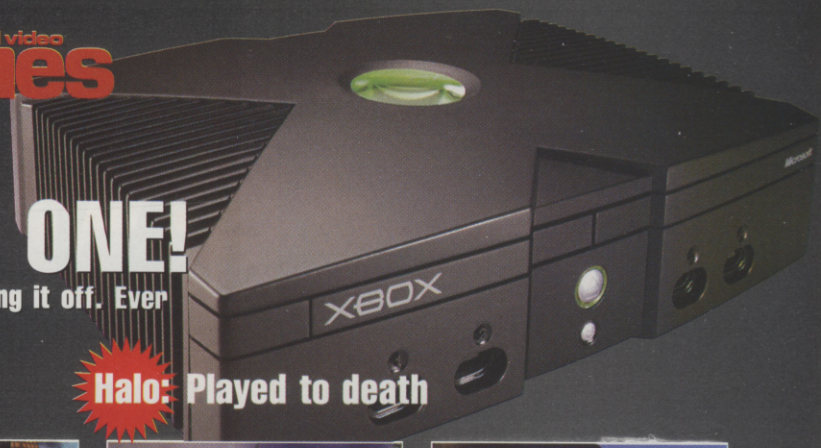

XBOX: WE'VE GOT ONE!

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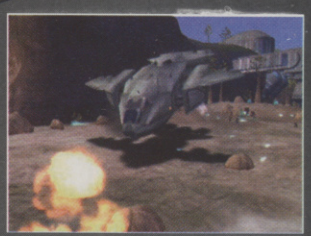
Munch's: Full-on playtest

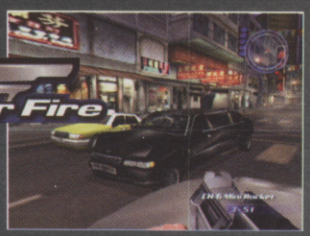
Halo: Played to death

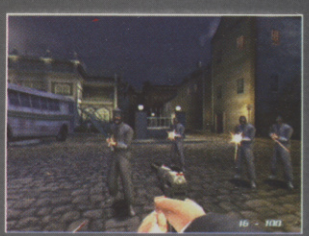


BOND BUSTS BALLS!

James Bond 007 In... Agent Under Fire

PS2 Review





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We finally get code (assuming there are no more delays)

At last!

Can you smell what Hunter's cooking?

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HANDHEL

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POKEMON CRYSTAL

COST: **£29.99**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **NINTENDO**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**

Christmas is coming which means there must be another Game Boy Pokemon game due. Ah, here it is, delivered down the magical gaming tunnel from heaven direct to the CVG offices. But don't get too excited – Crystal isn't brand new, it's just an upgraded version of last year's Gold and Silver gems. So is it a bit of a rip-off, like Pokemon Yellow? Should the cash-strapped Pokemon fan invest in yet another re-working of old material? Let's consider...

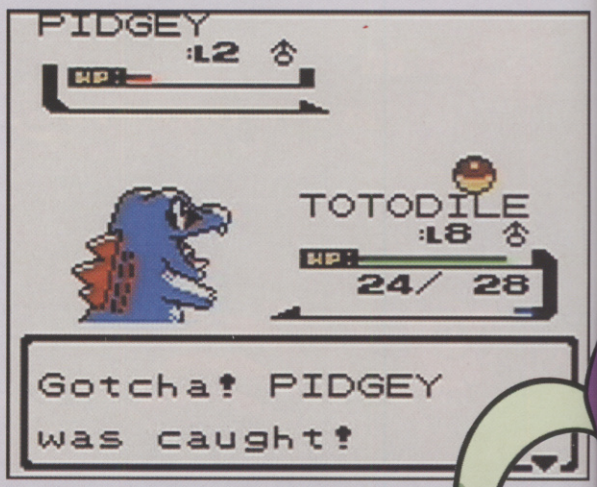
PRETTY PICTURES

First the bits that make it worthwhile investing in something you've already spent more than enough time and money on over the previous year. Looks may not be everything, but candy-coated visuals sure make life more bearable and Crystal scores high points in this department.

Each lil' critter that enters into battle with your brave Pokemaster now has an animated taunt that reflects its cuteness or nastiness factor. Machop flexes his muscles, Shellder waggles his tongue and Pikachu pees his pants and electrocutes himself. And aside from the little cherubs themselves, the overall look of Crystal is even better than Gold and Silver. New areas have been added such as a roof garden on the top of Goldenrod City Department store, and many other locations have been spruced up for good measure too.

ALL THIS AND BRAINS TOO

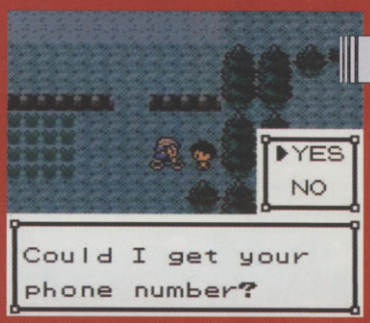
Still undecided? Rest assured that Crystal has several cool new features besides swanky looks. The Ruins of Alph have been expanded and turned into a treasure-hunting quest, and



New battle animations – worth getting excited about

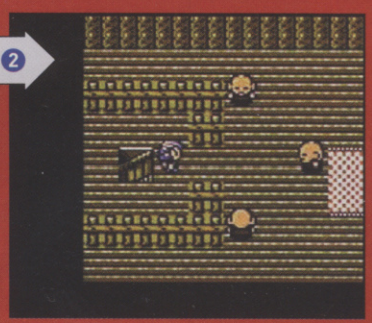
HOT DOGS

One of the most irritating aspects of Gold and Silver was the slippery nature of the rare dogs Raichu, Suicune and Entei. Remember how mad you felt when you happened upon one of the elusive trio, only to find that they scarpered before you could even show them your Pokeballs? Grind your teeth no longer because Crystal has addressed the problem admirably. There's a whole new story involving the monks in the Tin Tower and a new character called Eusine, who is also on Suicune's trail.



Searching for Suicune is easier so now you have time to chat up other trainers

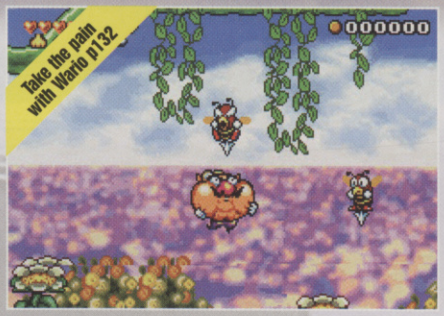
There he is! Suicune catching some rays in sunny Olivine. Get after him!



Beat the three monks and you get the chance to battle and catch Suicune. Sorted

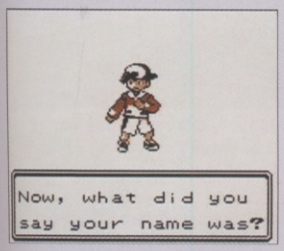
LDS

UR HANDS BUSY



Mario's arch-nemesis returns in a stunning GBA platformer - check out his bloaty head

It's the game of the Stallone comeback movie Driven, but can the old skool action still cut it?



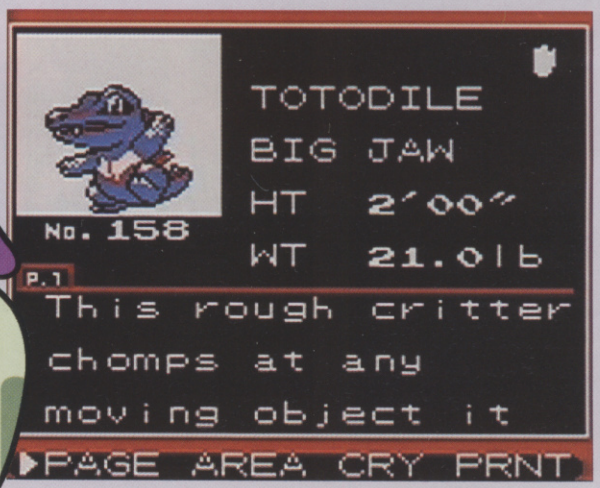
One of the fiendishly difficult questions you can expect to face

The CVG office, Pokemon style. Note Les's Piranha Plants

Blackthorne City features the new Dragon User Challenge in the Dragon's Den. Probably the best new addition is the Battle Tower in Olivine. Treat this as a mini-Pokemon Stadium where you get to battle master trainers until you faint with joy. Sweet.

The introduction of lots of new faces in Crystal is also a good move. This time the trainers you meet on your travels will save presents for you, and you'll also get to meet strange little people such as the Pokemon Seer in Olivine and the Move Tutor in Goldenrod. If you like dressing up in skirts, you can even choose to play as a girl trainer if you like.

Buy the game to discover the ending of this cryptic sentence uttered deep inside the Dragon's Den



The colours are more vibrant than ever before

WEIGHING UP THE GOODS

Crystal is a very classy package. If you own Gold or Silver you'll be somewhat cheesed-off that it's been released so soon, but can you really deny yourself the delights of the new battle animations? If you've never played Pokemon before, this is the game to get – the best of the bunch so far. But experienced Pokemanics will have played much of it before. Also it's a shame the mobile phone innovations in the Japanese version didn't make it to the US and UK versions, depriving us of the chance to download our own Celebi. Final verdict? Only just worth it.

7

DOOM

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **DAVID A PALMER STUDIOS**
PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**

The Granddaddy of shooters chainsaws its way onto GBA, spraying green blood over the doubters who said first-person couldn't work on the handheld. The gameplay seems a bit dated now compared to the mission-led likes of Ecks v Sever as after all, Doom is just many levels of mazes and monsters to blast through with no real objectives other than to kill everything. But the tense atmosphere and spooky nerve-shredding sound effects show the pretenders to its throne just how it should be done.

You need a rocket launcher, not a handgun, to deal with the likes of these two, or the blood that sprays will be yours

Co-op mode, gang up for revenge on the mutants

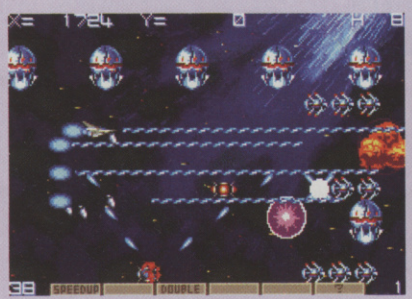
Blast your way through to the med pack – you're gonna need it

INTO THE DARKNESS

The usual lighting issues that plague this type of game have been dealt with superbly, as you can switch to a much lighter option that brightens everything up to ease the eye strain.

As far as multiplayer goes, you get awesome four-player deathmatches, even if the levels are a bit big. Co-op mode is a blast as you plan ahead to get the right keys to open doors or team up to take on the bigger monsters. Dated, but Doom has survived the transition to the handheld well.

8


Old-school doesn't always mean rubbish

Strategically powering-up is the key

GRADIUS ADVANCE

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **KONAMI**
PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**

It's been 20 years since Konami's first side-scrolling shooter, and what better way to celebrate the anniversary than to release another? The Gradius games have always been a hardcore choice and the GBA version is no exception.

Boss fight madness – yes!

But to widen the appeal and help even out the difficulty a little there are brand new level tutorials where the game actually plays itself to show you what to do. There are also options to make the game as easy or as challenging as you want. It's classic retro shooting at its finest, and the game makes good use of GBA's sprite-scaling abilities too, with massive asteroids to fly through and colossal bosses to fight. Gameplay is a bit shallow, especially compared to stuff like Advance Wars, but Gradius still delivers joy.

7

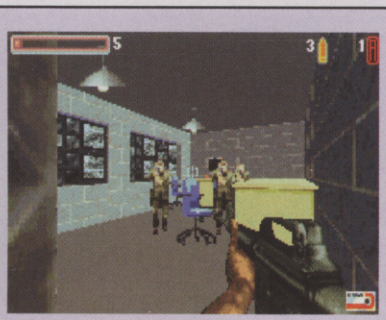
ISS

The much-loved SNES football classic gets a timely GBA conversion and easily lands the accolade of best handheld footie game ever. The ISS series is for many the definitive game of digital soccer and just mentioning the SNES version to crusty old gamers is enough to see them go misty-eyed and moist at the groin, their fingers starting to twitch.

With gameplay like arcade footie games of yore, it's easy to start creating chances but the subtleties and tricks you can pull off only begin

The shooting system is great and lets you chip, place or blast the ball

Blam! Shoot guards in the head with the sniper rifle and watch them drop to the floor



Raiding those office supplies can get you in hot water with your building's caretakers

Take them all out before they raise the alarm to more tooled-up guards

ECKS VS SEVER

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **CRAWFISH**
PUBLISHER: **BAM! ENTERTAINMENT**

Two rival maverick agents with dark pasts go up against each other in this highly entertaining GBA first-person shooter. You play as Ecks or Sever and the game pans out differently, depending on which you choose. Controlling your agents is no problem at all despite not being able to look up or down, and there's an awesome array of firepower at your disposal.

MULTIPLE GREATNESS

It's the little touches in Ecks V Sever that'll blow you apart, like the way enemy characters' corpses stay where you shot them, the clever level design and the surprisingly mature and intelligent plotting between stages. There's a mammoth arsenal of real-world weapons and the two different takes on the same overall story is a neat touch too.

Most impressive, however, are the multiplayer games. Grab a few mates with a copy of the game each and you can play in straight deathmatch, try to find and defuse a bomb up against the clock and your rivals, or play as an assassin on a mission to kill a VIP while your mates try to protect him as a team. Ecks V Sever is an incredible achievement on GBA and the mission-based levels just about give it an edge over Doom's endless mazes and pitched battles.

Penalty shoot-outs make for some edge-of-your-seat gaming

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **KONAMI**
PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**

to surface after dilligent play. Which makes for muchos longevity and intricate moves that can take you by surprise. The graphics look tasty now they've been miniaturised, there's spoken commentary, a load of national teams and tweakable options aplenty. And with a fantastic two-player option this is *the* handheld choice for football fans. The only real gripe is the camera is set close to the action, making it tricky to keep track of off-the-ball running. Otherwise ISS is a joy.

PHALANX

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **KEMCO**
PUBLISHER: **BIG BEN INTERACTIVE**

Scream through space canyons, guns blazing

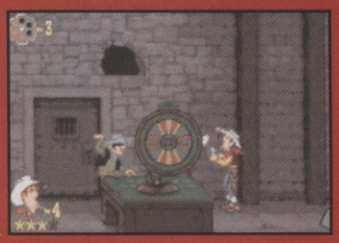
Power-ups are crazy and dish out the pain

Two retro shooters in one month? Sweet as! Where Gradius is about icy precision piloting and strategic power-ups, Phalanx is about pure firepower. The weapon upgrades are incredible and often outrageous – filling the screen with flames and explosions. Unusually for a side-scrolling shoot 'em up you also get an energy bar so you can take more than one hit before death licks your face.

Phalanx races along at a cracking pace and there are multi-direction scrolling sections to keep the action fresh. The game presents a different kind of challenge from Gradius and is much more about messy destruction than precision flying. Phalanx doesn't require the same level of hardcore gameplaying skill as Gradius and feels a little bit sloppier because of it. The graphics are great and the game uses the oblong GBA screen brilliantly. If you don't feel up to the Gradius challenge, Phalanx is the next best on the system.

MORE REVIEWS!

GAME: **LUCKY LUKE**
FORMAT: **GBA**
PRICE: **£34.99**



Mech games = mega money in Japan

Shoot bad guys in the face and solve action-based puzzles in this decent platform game. It's pretty, fun to play and the mini-quests, like saving distressed damsels, add a much-needed twist to the action. Fairly generic but still fun.

7

GAME: **TETRIS WORLDS**
FORMAT: **GBA**
PRICE: **£34.99**

Looks as plain as ever but plays sweet

Tetris may well be older than some of our readers and after dozens of incarnations across the formats, it's back in the palm of your hand. There are loads of extra modes as well as the classic Marathon mode, and it's as good as ever.

7

GAME: **KAO THE KANGAROO**
FORMAT: **GBA**
PRICE: **£34.99**

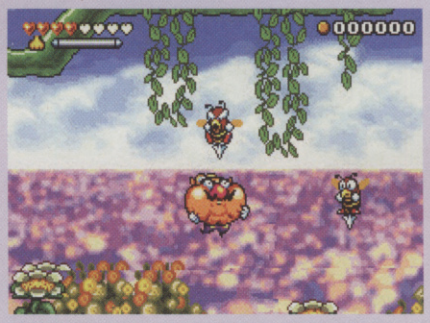
Colourful and bright, but a pain to play

Punch and jump your way through some of the brightest environments on GBA, but it's all pretty average. Attacking is fiddly and the whole game just feels too sloppy, both in controls and level layout. Shame.

5

WARIOLAND 4

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **NINTENDO**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**



Use the hornet's sting to get a bloaty head

The blue gems help unlock bonuses at the end of each stage so make sure you blag them all

Wario loves pain. He likes nothing better than feeling a vampire bat sink its teeth into his chunky neck and is ecstatic when he gets burned by acrid zombie breath. He's a freak for sure but such painful adventures do have their uses. The bat bite turns him into a vampire bat, temporarily letting Wario fly about. The death breath lets him sink through solid floors.

HURT ME MORE

By using Wario's masochistic urges you have to explore a giant pyramid. It's a fairly standard platform game set-up, but there's originality on every screen. As you explore you have to hurt Wario to gain temporary new skills that you then use to solve puzzles. The levels themselves are works of mini gaming genius with every obstacle and every foe in there for a reason,

SUPER STREET FIGHTER II TURBO REVIVAL

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

Three elephants! Not even the SNES could handle that

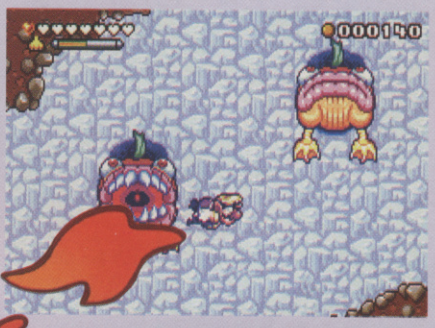
There's a total retro onslaught about to hit GBA, with SSF2TR, Final Fight One and Doom leading the charge. Is this a good thing? Who cares, it's Street Fighter 2, it looks better than the SNES game, it's on a teeny-weeny screen and you can play the damn thing anywhere.

It may not be that original, but if you're a beat 'em up freak there's nothing quite like kicking the crap out of a mutated Brazilian bloke and a Russian man-gorilla in an old-fashioned Street Fighter stylee. The big problems are the lack of buttons and the diddy D-pad which makes pulling off complex moves very tricky. Otherwise it's every bit as good as you want it to be, and the best handheld fighter yet.

7

Wazza's about to take the pain from a snappy croc

Giant fishes with even bigger appetites spell doom



Man-eating plants can only be a bad thing

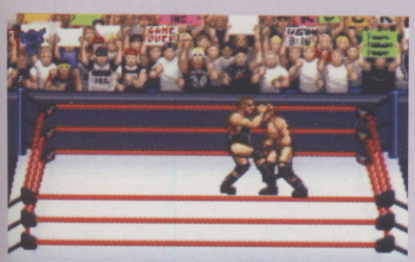
with a use to figure out. There are secret areas, too, and some of the finest mini-games and bonus rounds known to man. Wario's adventure is leaps and bounds ahead of Mario Advance and is among the nicest-looking GBA games to boot. Let the hurt into your life.

9

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **NIATSUME**
PUBLISHER: **THQ**

WWF: ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA

GBA's inaugural WWF game chokeslams its way onto your diddy console. It comes with bags of attitude and a full roster of gameplay modes – play in Exhibition, King of the Ring, Wrestlemania, Pay-Per-View or go all-out in a full Season of grappling hell. 24 of the biggest names appear in squashed-down digital form and each has a suitably cheesy intro sequence.



Grapple! Now slam his head onto your knee

So far so good then, but the disappointment comes when you burst into the ring. The wrestling is made difficult due to tricky controls that require you to grapple then hammer buttons, and the lack of any 3D element is a futher gripe. The game is much better than Fire Pro Wrestling, but pales compared to the SmackDown games.

6

MORE REVIEWS!

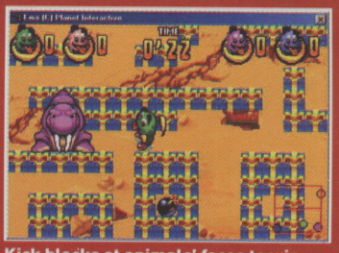
GAME: **PREHISTORIK MAN**
FORMAT: **GBA**
PRICE: **£34.99**

It's retro but not in a good way

This one is a bit of an average platformer. Visually it's just okay and the level design isn't too bad either, but it's spoiled by an utter lack of originality. Better than Kao but you'll have played stuff like this before. If you've already got Mario or Rayman then don't bother.

6

GAME: **PLANET MONSTERS**
FORMAT: **GBA**
PRICE: **£34.99**



Kick blocks at animals' faces to win

An excellent difficulty curve and interesting bosses make this Bomberman-style maze 'em up a treat. Avoid the irate walruses and elephants, kick blocks in monsters' faces – it's a winning formula.

8

GAME: **POWERPUFF GIRLS**
FORMAT: **GBA**
PRICE: **£34.99**

Who ever said Girl Power was dead?

The Power Puff Girls are back in a surprisingly difficult scrolling shoot 'em up. Great graphics and the ability to switch between characters make this a blast. It gets repetitive but fans of the show will be satisfied.

6

MORE REVIEWS!

GAME: **DEXTER'S LABORATORY**
FORMAT: **GBA**
PRICE: **£34.99**

Isometric, old-school and good

Roam Dexter's huge laboratory in search of hundreds of Dee-Dee clones running amok. The mix of puzzle-solving and collecting is addictive and pretty original too. The game's huge but it looks pretty samey and gets a bit repetitive.

7

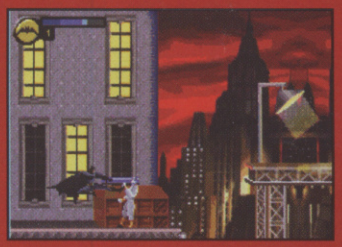
GAME: **CASPER**
FORMAT: **GBA**
PRICE: **£34.99**

It's pretty and original but a bit kiddie

A game for kids that's engaging enough for everyone. Play as Casper and use your transforming skills to help your sleepwalking buddy get through the varied levels in one piece. Scare him to make him run, turn flat to bridge gaps.

6

GAME: **BATMAN VENGEANCE**
FORMAT: **GBA**
PRICE: **£34.99**

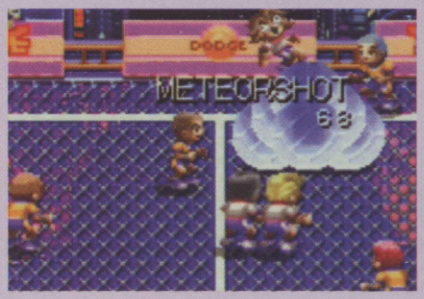


There are much better GBA platformers

It's got tasty FMV and gadgets but also frustrating generic gameplay and lots of instant death moments – a problem considering Batman's only got one life. Bat-fans may be happy but others will tire quickly.

6

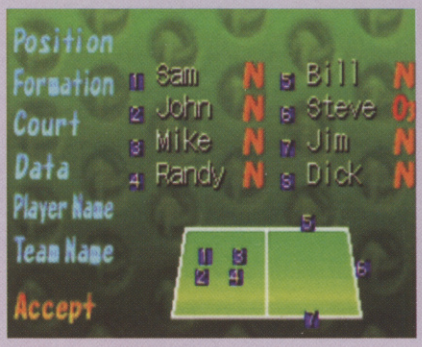
Foul your opponents for fun. Just don't get caught



Get good at special shots and victory will be yours

SUPER DODGE BALL ADVANCE

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-2**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **ATLUS**
PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**



With player names like Randy and Dick, how can Super Dodge Ball possibly fail?

It's the GBA version of the kid's game where you pummel your opponents with balls until they break. Super Dodge Ball Advance is quirky but cool with the right mixture of strategy and action to keep you smiling on your daily commute.

There's depth to the action and learning the correct timing for the better moves will take practice. You can switch formations and try out different strategies, and as you progress you'll have to adapt to different teams' playing styles. Complicated at first, it blossoms if you give it time.

7

DRIVEN

COST: **£34.99**
PLAYERS: **1-4**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **CRAWFISH INTERACTIVE**
PUBLISHER: **BAM! ENTERTAINMENT**

How much do you care about fancy visuals? You're going to have to decide because Driven's not that pretty. But what it lacks in beauty it makes up for in unbelievable speed.

Speed bursts make your car glow yellow

Avoid rival racers or you'll take major damage

The top-down view allows for the fastest handheld racing we've ever seen and providing you can get used to the handling, most people will love the hardcore action. There are loads of play modes and a genuinely engaging story game, but where Driven excels is in multiplayer. Four players racing foot-to-the-floor is a brilliantly frenzied experience.

7

There's only one way to settle this!
HONDURAS
60
Scissors cut paper, paper wraps stone, stone blunts scissors, chainsaw cuts metal, metal burns, burn the chainsaw! Sort out your differences and vent your aggression with Robot Wars Arenas of Destruction. Build your own robots then destroy the opposition in massive metal mayhem. It beats doing the washing up!
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BBC mbc
ARENAS OF DESTRUCTION
PlayStation 2
PC CD-ROM

CVG Trailb

The Dreamcast is still very much alive and kicking. And to prove it, we've rustled up the hottest DC giveaway you'll ever see.

START HERE

Christmas has come early ladies and germs. Sega Dreamcast is playing Santa Claus this year, and its sack is bulging with DC joy. Over 70 top games (and that means over 70 winners) says the odds are looking good, folks. Shenmue 2, Virtua Tennis 2, and Headhunter are among the cast of stunning titles up for grabs, and winning some of this brilliant booty couldn't be easier. Seven questions, seven answers, loads of prizes. Ching, ching! Get your entries in sharpish, then kick back and let Lady Luck do her thang. Just imagine it – a snowy winter's night, the fire roaring, you playing a DC and a copy of Metropolis Street Racer. What more could you possibly need to experience utter happiness?

7th 90 MINUTES

COURTESY OF **SEGA DREAMCAST**

England has qualified for World Cup 2002, so get in on the football fever by winning a copy of 90 Minutes and re-enacting all the qualifying matches – especially the 5-1 kicking we gave Germany.

Q. Who scored a free-kick at Wembley in England's recent World Cup qualifier against Greece?

A. David Beckham B. Andy Cole C. Michael Owen D. Paul Scholes

6th FLOIGAN BROS

COURTESY OF **SEGA DREAMCAST**

The Floigan Brothers may well be a tad uglier than the blokes from Hear'Say, but at least the Floigans bring us proper entertainment. Get some.

Q. What are the Floigan brothers' first names?

A. Poigle & Roigle B. Doigle & Noigle C. Floigle & Boigle D. Hoigle & Moigle

5th SONIC ADVENTURE 2

COURTESY OF **SEGA DREAMCAST**

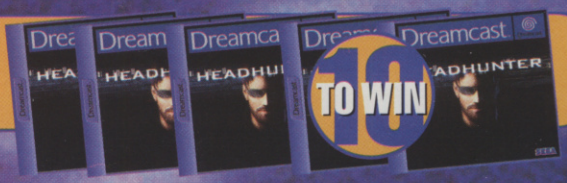
Good vs evil, yin vs yang, and now comes Sonic vs Shadow. Feel the blistering pace of SA2.

Q. Sega's prickly pinball celebrated a special birthday this year. So how old is he?

A. 10 B. 18 C. 21 D. 25

4th HEADHUNTER

COURTESY OF **SEGA DREAMCAST**



Huge roaring black motorbikes, thick beards, and bad guys. Sounds more like a Hell's Angels get-together than a cool Sega game.

Q. What's the name of Headhunter's beardy hero?

A. Jack Weighed B. Jack Wade C. Jack Wayed D. Jack Waid

3rd VIRTUA TENNIS 2

COURTESY OF **SEGA DREAMCAST**

The ladies have come out to play in this second instalment of the Virtua Tennis classic. Venus Williams and other top female players appear in VT2, and all concerned are up for some serious hard court two-on-two ball-pounding action with the men. Let the swinging begin.

Q. Which lanky foreigner won the men's singles at Wimbledon earlier this year?

A. Goran Ivanisevic B. Mark Philippoussis C. Cedric Pioline D. Pat Rafter

2nd SHENMUE II

COURTESY OF **SEGA DREAMCAST**

Ryo Hazuki's epic adventure continues in this stunning follow-up to the now classic Shenmue. Murder, deception, and mystery unfold in massive, visually astonishing and brilliantly interactive environments.

Q. Which legendary games mastermind is behind the magnificent Shenmue series?

A. Shigeru Miyamoto B. Taku Chihaya C. Hideo Kojima D. Yu Suzuki

blazer!

ULTRA DC BOOTY

THE ULTIMATE DREAMCAST PACK

CORRI-TESY OF **SEGA DREAMCAST**

Welcome to DC Heaven: a spanking new Dreamcast, Metropolis Street Racer, Jet Set Radio, Virtua Fighter 3, a DC pad and a visual memory unit – all in one big juicy bundle – b-b-BOK! So what the hell are you waiting for, people? Pull out a pen, get on the case and make sure all your answers are correct to be in with a chance of nabbing this awesome prize.

Q. Which bustling metropolis gets defaced and busted up by pesky graffiti-scrawling roller punks in Jet Set Radio?

A. London-no
B. Tokyo-to
C. New York-ko
D. Paris-so

TO WIN

COMPETITION

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Floigan Bros
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

Sonic Adventure 2
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

Headhunter
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

Virtua Tennis 2
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

Shenmue II
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

The Ultimate Dreamcast Pack
Tick the correct answer:
A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D. ☐

Enter your details below

Name:

Age:

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Terms and conditions: Only entries with all of the questions completed and received before **September 20** will be entered into the prize draw. Winners will be notified by post, so don't call, eh? No cash alternatives. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The editor's decision is final. And when it comes to deciding, nobody decides like 'Decisive Al'. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply.

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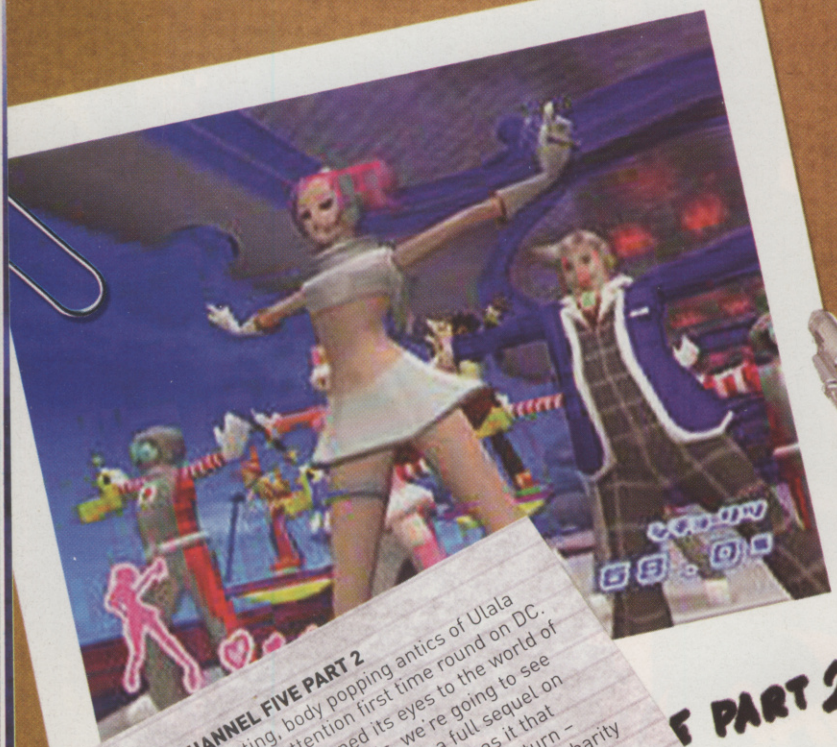


SPACE CHANNEL FIVE PART 2
The alien-busting, body popping antics of Ulala certainly got our attention first time round on DC. And now Sega has opened its eyes to the world of developing for former rivals, we're going to see Ulala and her dancemates with a full sequel on PS2 some time next year. Rumour has it that Michael Jackson is also scheduled to return – though if his recent attempts to organise a charity concert are anything to go by, everyone will back out at the last minute claiming 'other commitments'. Poor Jacko...

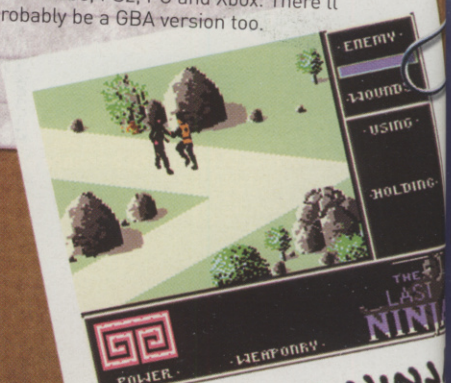
F PART 2

SHHH, YOU DIDN'T HEAR IT FROM US
Whispers emerging from across the pond in America: the first game based on Episode II of the Star Wars saga is shaping up to be another flight-and-fight sim *a la* Starfighter. Expect a slightly enhanced engine with a few new ships from the movie in there somewhere.

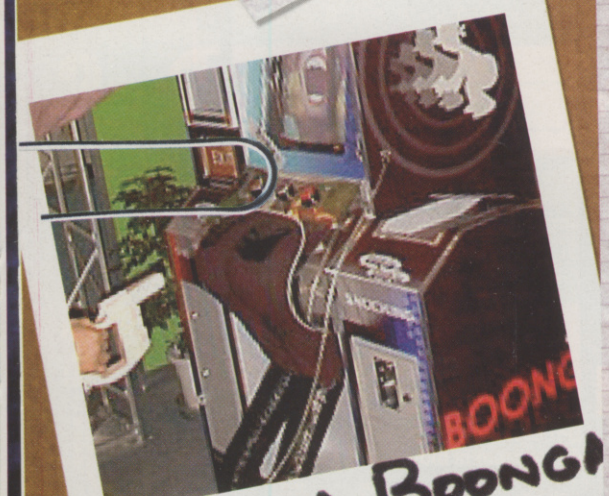
The Game Boy Advance continues to trawl the ranks of retro games, this time picking up Nintendo's Starfox (Starwing). The developer may have renamed it Starfight but it's not fooling us – this is Starwing in all but name.

STARFIGHT

Eight-bit classic The Last Ninja is back – well, almost. The team which put together the original game has been re-assembled and is busy bringing the game to GameCube, PS2, PC and Xbox. There'll probably be a GBA version too.



THE LAST NINJ



BOONGA BOONGA

BOONGA BOONGA
Okay, so we can't see Twisted Metal: Black in the UK because it has an exploding aeroplane in it. And Microsoft Flight Sim came in for a bit of flak, because yes, it teaches you how to fly passenger planes. (Sounds quite educational, actually). All fair enough. But a game where you get to stick your hand up someone's butt? Oh alright, open the doors wide and lay down the red carpet for that one. The fine line between innovative game design and perversion blurs once again with this lunatic Japanese arcade machine. You use a hand-shaped controller which we shall, for our convenience, call item A. The cabinet is in the shape of someone bending over exposing a part of their body, which we shall call item B. You take item A and very simply insert it into item B. Get the picture? Good. And you can stop laughing now 'cos it's on its way to the UK soon. Look out for it in an arcade near you. (Don't protest, we know you will.)

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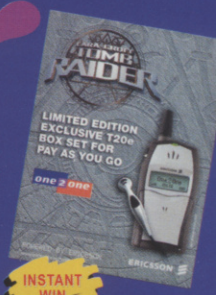

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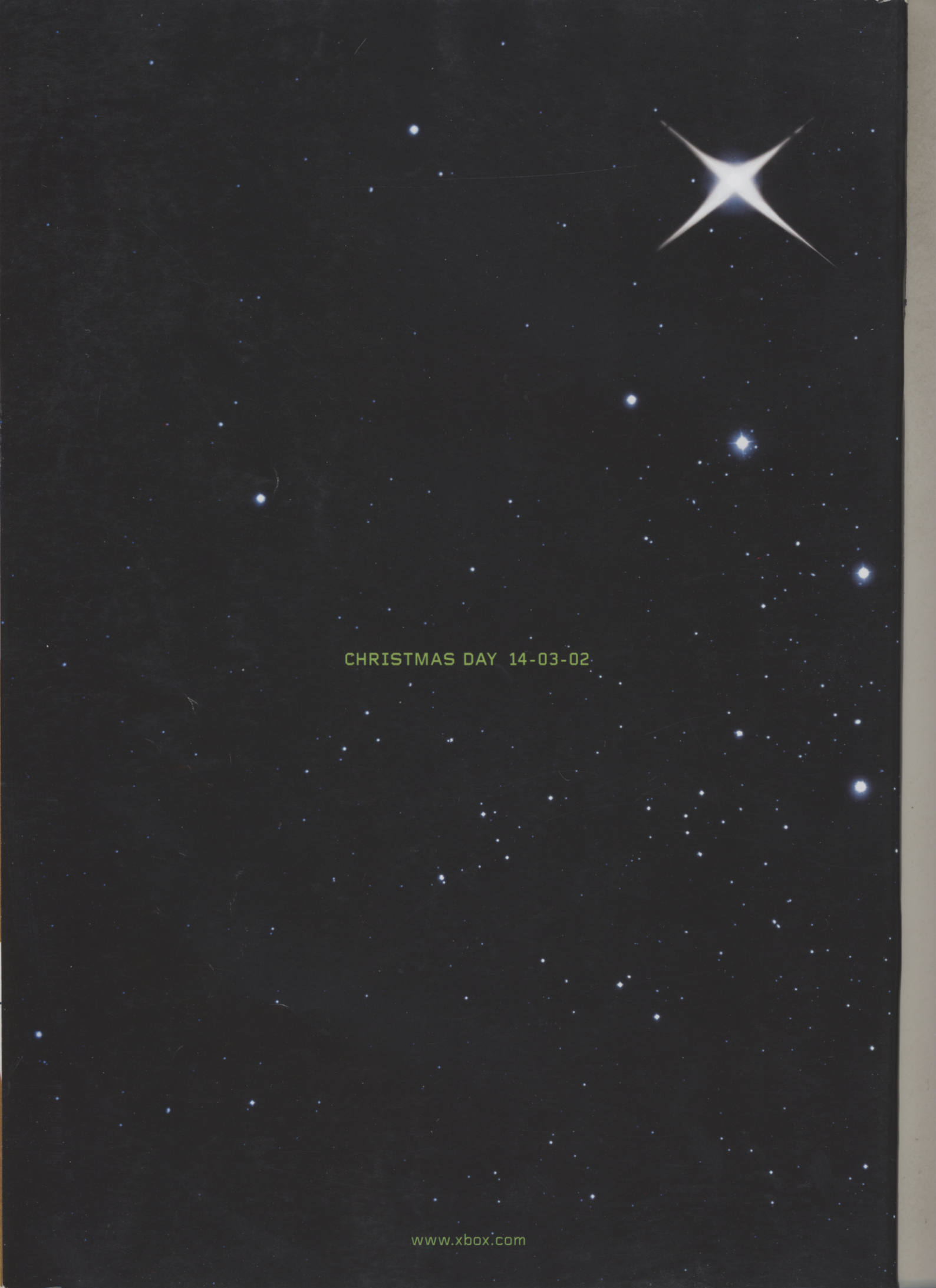
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